TALKS WITH THE BAIRNS ABOUT BAIRNS

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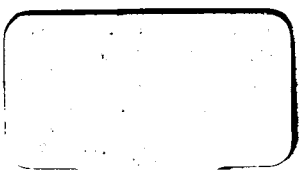

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'COME NOW, SWEAR, TO SAVE THY LIFE.' *See page* 153.

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TALKS WITH THE BAIRNS

ABOUT BAIRNS.

BY

RUTH ELLIOTT,

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PAGE.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON 7

MOZART 16

TAM EDWARD 32

DAVY AND DOLLY 49

NORMAN AT THE BRIGHTON AQUARIUM 57

DISAGREEABLE CHILDREN 67

ANNIE THE GRUMBLER 76

I AND MINE 94

VOLNEY BEKNER 115

KATHLEEN NELSON 126

ROYAL AND LOYAL 144

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TALKS WITH THE BAIRNS.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

THERE are a great many ways of talking to children; some of them pleasant: some of them very unpleasant. There are sermons, and lectures, and speeches; talks about naughtiness, and talks about goodness; lesson talks and play talks. There are rebukes and reproofs; praise and commendation; suggestions and corrections. There are talks about grammar and arithmetic—very dry! and talks about fairies

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and genii, and giants and dwarfs. There are adventures and misadventures; travels by sea and by land; imprisonments and escapes. There are talks about botany and zoology, fascinatingly interesting; and there are talks about 'Once upon a time!'

Now, out of all these, which shall I choose to talk about to my little readers? Sermons? I am afraid they will not like them; nor the lectures. And yet they are very good things, and everybody is the better for one occasionally. Grammar and arithmetic? They have those at school. Reproofs and rebukes? O, dear, no!

Well, then, talks about naughtiness and goodness? how will that do? There is nothing in all the world more sweet and lovable than a sweet and lovable child; there are few things more unpleasant than a disagreeable one. What a good thing it is that no child is always naughty; the very worst have some wish to be good; and at the same time the best go wrong sometimes! I will tell you about some of them by-and-bye.

If you look at the heading of this chapter you will see what I am going to talk to you about. I am going to talk with my pen instead of my

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tongue, and you must listen with your eyes instead of your ears. It would be very much more pleasant if we could have a big room all to ourselves—you and I—and talk in the firelight. Then I suppose I should have Frank and Arthur mounting guard on the arms of the big easy-chair; and Daisy and May on either side; and Bertie on the rug, his yellow curls shining in the flickering light; and all the rest of the bairns round and about, listening and laughing, and sometimes perhaps crying. That would be better than pen and ink, wouldn't it?

I wonder what sort of children you all are. What a funny thing it would be if you were obliged to write out your own characters and send them to me. Suppose you try. A little boy did once, and this is what he wrote:

'I am a little boy, so I haven't got much character yet, but I s'pose it will grow. I am good sometimes, and naughty sometimes. I like play better than lessons, and I wish Jane wouldn't pull my hair so when she brushes it, 'cause it hurts. Part of my character is, I don't like to be hurt. I am very brave, only I don't like to go upstairs in the dark. Tom was whipped last week, but I have never been whipped, so I'm better than Tom. We don't have whippings at

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our school. I give a penny a week to the missionaries; gran'ma gives it me. I don't think I have any more character.'

What do you think of that? I shall have more to tell you about that young gentleman one of these days, and you shall judge for yourselves what sort of a character he has.

Now I will tell you what I like children to be. I like the boys to be boy-like, full of fun and frolic, fearless as young lions, and as honourable as brave; daring and truthful, self-reliant and reliable, generous and trustworthy, loving and lovable. At the same time I should like them to remember that roughness is not manliness, nor foolhardiness true courage; that a gentleman is gentle when needs be, and courteous always.

I like the girls to be thoughtful and gentle, sweet-tempered and helpful, merry and cheerful, veritable little sunbeams in every home.

I know there are a great many such boys and girls in the world, but I wish there were more, don't you? It is easier for children to be good now than it used to be; they have so much encouragement. Hundreds of books are written on purpose to help them, and nearly every paper has its 'page for the little ones,' containing all

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sorts of friendly counsels and advice. I dare say you will find something of the sort in these talks of ours now and then. Mind you do not skip it and run on to the tales; that will not be fair. If you take the cake you must take the bread and butter too.

Well, now, I dare say you want to know what sort of bairns I am going to talk about. Suppose we start with the clever ones. There have been and still are some very bright, clever boys and girls in the world, and if you like to hear about them as much as I like to write, we shall all be quite satisfied.

There are different sorts of cleverness, and different degrees. The boy who learns his lessons so quickly, and understands them, who takes off all the prizes and stands first in his class, is the clever boy of the school, and will probably, but not certainly, grow up a clever man. The same rule holds good with the girls.

There are the mechanical boys, who make all sorts of ingenious contrivances, and the imaginative boys—and girls—who tell long, thrilling stories to their breathless companions, and the clever little housewives who make pastry and puddings better than cook, and the boy

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with the splendid memory, who repeats, without a mistake, 'How the waters come down at Lodore,' and knows his Scott by heart.

Then there are those dreadfully clever children who know everything about everybody's business but their own! and those other bright young geniuses who are always making experiments and blowing themselves, or their friends, up with gunpowder.

I will tell you about a very clever boy, and a very curious one, too. His name was Samuel; you shall hear his surname presently. When he was a tiny little fellow in petticoats he went to a dame's school, and learned the lessons usual for children of his age. But he was such a clever little lad, he soon outstripped his companions. One day his mother gave him the Prayer-Book, and pointing to the collect for the day, said: 'Sam, you must get this by heart.' I dare say she wanted to get rid of him for a time; you know even clever children are sometimes very troublesome. Well, having settled Master Sam, as she thought, she went upstairs, but had only reached the second floor when she heard the patter of little feet behind her. Looking

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round she saw him coming up full speed, book in hand.

'What's the matter?' she said.

'I know it,' said Sam; and so he did; every word. Unfortunately he was very short-sighted, and when alone in the streets had to stoop down to look at the gutters before he dared jump over them. Standing up he could not see how wide they were. His mother generally sent the servant with him to school, and to fetch him back; but one day she was late, and he would not wait. The dame tried to keep him, but he was a most determined, strong-willed boy, and would not be kept. Afraid to trust him alone, and not daring to go with him, for he would not have her, she followed him at a distance, watching him carefully. Presently the young gentleman looked round and saw her. This was too much! his youthful dignity was touched to the quick. Clenching his fists, he flew at her, and began to beat her with all his might. What a nice little boy! wasn't he? As he grew older he went to another school, where he came in for his share of the cane. No doubt he deserved it. His wonderful memory astonished his schoolfellows. One of them recited a long piece of poetry to

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him one day, and when he had finished Sam began, and repeated it with only one mistake. He used to help them with their lessons, and in return they used to carry him to school every morning.

His parents were not rich, but with the help of a friend they determined to send their clever boy to Oxford. The night before he left home his old schoolmistress brought him a farewell present of gingerbread, and said he was the best scholar she had ever had. He never forgot the compliment, and often spoke about it with pleasure after he had become famous.

It was some years before he began to be known in the great world. He went to live in London, and wrote some works which attracted public attention, and at last people found out what a wonderfully clever man they had among them. Then his fame spread far and wide. The king settled a pension on him; the Universities of Dublin and Oxford conferred on him the degree of LL.D., and he was courted and fêted by the best men of the age. When he died he was buried in Westminster Abbey, and a magnificent monument, which cost eleven hundred guineas, was erected to his memory in St.

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Paul's Cathedral. A smaller one was also erected in the Cathedral of Lichfield, with this inscription:—

The friends of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.,
A native of Lichfield,
Erected this Monument,
As a tribute of respect
To the memory of a man of extensive learning,
A distinguished moral writer, and a sincere Christian.
He died Dec. 13, 1784, aged 75.

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MOZART.

ARE you fond of music? Do you like to sit still, when all the rest of the congregation in church or chapel are moving out, and listen to the sweet, beautiful sounds of the organ? Do you love to creep into the room where the piano is, when no one else is there, and touch the notes with gentle fingers, bringing out all sorts of little harmonies and melodies all your own? Do you dream dreams of becoming some day the wonderful composer of wonderful music?

Or do you like street organs and German bands best? I am afraid some of you do. I heard a little girl say once that she wished her papa would sell the piano and buy a street organ

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instead; it would be such fun to turn the handle! I dare say it would for her! Very few children really care for good music; they like dances and merry tunes, but know nothing of the delight a certain little lad, of whom I am going to tell you, felt in listening to the sweet sounds his own tiny fingers drew from his violin and harpsichord.

Once upon a time there was a little boy who lived with his father and mother and little sister in a fine old German city. His name was John Chrysostom Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. How would you like to have such a queer long name as that? If you had you would probably be called Jack; but this little boy was called Wolfgang. His sister's name was Fredrika; a pretty, clever little girl she was. Before she was seven years old, her father, Leopold Mozart, began to teach her music, and Wolfgang, who was not quite three, used to stand by her side and listen, and strike the keys with his baby fingers, trying to make chords. It amused his father very much, and he used to encourage him to learn the airs which he himself played on his violin. This was no trouble to Wolfgang; he would climb upon the high seat made for him, and play away for hours, learning all sorts of sweet

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little melodies. When he was four, his father, half in fun, began to teach him the rules and laws of music, and composed easy little pieces on purpose for him. These so delighted the little lad that he began to compose for himself, and when he was five years old he produced some pieces, simple enough in themselves, but perfectly marvellous as the work of such a child. You may imagine how proud his parents were of him. I dare say yours would be proud of you if you could do the same.

When he was six his father took him and Fredrika to Munich for a few weeks. The Elector of Bavaria was much pleased with the clever children, and told them to study and practise and he would help them to make a name and position. Wolfgang returned home full of enthusiasm and ambition, and from that time practised harder than ever. Most likely the beautiful instruments he played at the Court made him love music even more than he had done before.

One day his father came in with a friend, and found his little son busily at work with pen, ink, and paper. 'What are you doing?' he asked.

'I am composing a concerto for the harpsichord; I have almost finished the first part,'

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replied the little musician, still going on with his work.

'Let us see the scrawl,' said his father, not very politely, certainly. But it really was a scrawl—all blots and corrections.

'O, no, please,' said Wolfgang, eagerly, holding his precious paper tightly. 'I have not finished it yet.'

But his father took it from him, and looked over it with his friend, both of them laughing at the funny scribble, and hurting the little composer's feelings very much. No one likes to be laughed at; not even the clever children, you see. But presently his father, looking more closely at it, found that it really was a most clever and difficult composition. I dare say he stopped laughing then.

Another time a celebrated violinist came to see Leopold Mozart, to ask his opinion of six trios which he had just composed.

'Let us try them,' said Mozart. 'I will take bass, you the first violin, and our friend here the second.' The friend was the Archbishop's trumpeter. But Wolfgang did not approve of this arrangement; *he* wanted to take the second violin, and begged so hard that they said he might try. In high delight he tuned his little

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violin, and took his score copy of the trios. The signal was given, and off went the violins, the composer very jealously listening lest this troublesome little monkey of a Wolfgang should spoil his beautiful trios by false notes or bad time. To his astonishment, and to the father's, for he had never heard his boy play on the violin before, Wolfgang played his part beautifully, scarcely making any mistakes, and keeping perfect time. You can hardly believe it, can you?

The Emperor of Austria heard about this wonderful boy, and sent for him to go to Court.

Dressed in a gay little court costume, Wolfgang went with his father to the Palace, at Vienna, and was taken into the concert-hall. A magnificent piano immediately attracted the little fellow's attention, and dropping his father's hand he sat down and began to touch the ivory keys softly with his fingers. There was no one in the hall, and gaining courage as he went on, he soon forgot all about the Court and the Emperor, and lost himself in the beautiful music. His tiny fingers seemed inspired, as they swept over the keys, filling the room with sounds, now sweet and low, now loud and triumphant! Suddenly he stopped, and looking

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round for his father, found himself surrounded by a brilliant crowd. There was the Emperor looking at him with astonished and admiring eyes; and the Empress smiling as she stooped to kiss the fair forehead of the marvellous child; and all the ladies and gentlemen of the Court gazing in amazement, and exclaiming that such a genius had never been known before.

'How beautifully you play!' said a lovely little girl, pressing close to his side and taking his hand. 'Will you teach me to play as well?'

'Not till you are bigger,' said Wolfgang simply. 'It is not easy; you have to sit so long, and you grow so tired.'

But the little Princess persisted, and clapped her hands for joy when he said he would try. The Emperor and Empress made a great pet of him, and he soon felt quite at home at the Imperial Court. No doubt he and the little Princess Marie Antoinette had many a childish chatter together. Now I am going to put a little bit of a moral right in the middle of the tale. With all his wonderful genius, and the admiration and flattery which were heaped upon him, this gentle, sweet-tempered little fellow was never spoilt. He was most obedient and loving

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to his parents; never out of temper; always willing to do as they wished. There was not one atom of conceit or vanity in his nature, and though he was sensitive he was not painfully self-conscious. The Emperor liked to joke him about his music. 'It is easy enough to play with all your fingers,' he said one day; 'but to play with only one, and the notes out of sight, would indeed excite admiration.'

With the greatest ease Wolfgang immediately began to play with one finger, striking the notes with decision, and keeping correct time. Go to the piano and see if you can play a tune with one finger.

When he was seven he went to Paris, and found his fame already there. The King sent for him and received him most kindly. Everybody wanted to see this little fair-haired German lad, whose music was the talk of the civilized world. He went to Versailles, where the Court was then staying, and gave an organ recital in the royal chapel before the King and his courtiers. Nothing had ever been heard like it before, and the little fellow received adulation and flattery enough to turn a wiser head. But in the midst of all the splendour and gaiety of his life, he still remained the same gentle, tender-hearted

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little Wolfgang, whom to know was to love. He was such a pretty little lad too, with his fair hair and quaint costume; and this was no small thing in such a beauty-loving world as ours.

While at Paris he composed two sonatas, which he dedicated to the Princess Victoire and the Countess of Tesse. They were printed, and eagerly bought by the musical world. The Princess was so pleased that she gave him a gold snuff-box. Not a very nice present, was it? especially for a little boy. Some people have funny ideas about presents. No doubt Wolfgang was pleased with the costly gift, but I expect he would much rather have had a beautiful violin. Have you ever read of the little boy who bought his father a cigar-case for a birthday present? It was a very handsome one, and Humphrey was delighted with it; he thought it such a beautiful present. It did not in the least matter that his father never smoked, and could not use it! I suppose the Princess thought her present so handsome that its uselessness was of no consequence. I call that a mistake; do not you?

I wonder if any of you—the musical bairns—ever tried to compose sonatas, and play tunes

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with one finger. If so, I should like to see the sonatas very much. I knew a little girl once who could play before she could read, and could master really difficult pieces before she was seven. She used to compose a great many little airs, but kept them all to herself, only playing when she thought no one could hear. She was very shy, as little girls used to be once upon a time. I do not think they are so shy now; sometimes I wish they were. Can you guess why? No? then I will tell you. Some boys and girls are so very disagreeable! they come into the room so roughly, without one bit of politeness, and behave so badly that every one is glad when they go out again. You notice all your little companions, and see if some of them would not be the better for a touch of shyness.

Well, now I will finish telling you about clever little Wolfgang and Fredrika. At Paris they played at two very grand concerts, and gave a finishing touch to their fame in that beautiful, music-loving city. Then they came to London to see the Queen. Now I am going to tell you a secret about the great people in London. They had had so much amusement that they were tired of everything. They thought they

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had seen everything worth seeing; gone everywhere worth going to, and done everything worth doing! They were tired of theatres and operas; tired of routs and balls; wearied to death of gossip and scandal; and sick of concerts. Was not that a nice state to be in?

And then they heard that a wonderful little German lad had come to see what sort of a country England was. There was quite an excitement! Actually there was something fresh to be seen and heard! An entirely new and hitherto unheard-of phenomenon! A yellow-haired laddie, not eight years of age, who could give organ recitals, compose sonatas, and play on the violin so exquisitely as to bring tears to the eyes of his audience! All fashionable London flocked to the hall where this marvellous boy performed, and found even greater wonders than they had expected. Nothing was talked of but music and Mozart, and Mozart and music. People who had never cared one atom for music, and did not know 'God save the Queen' from the 'Old Hundredth,' suddenly found out that they had a musical ear and classical taste, and went with the crowd to nod time to a child's sonatas.

The brother and sister played together at

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court, and at the public concerts, and were received with enthusiastic admiration everywhere. The Queen was delighted with the little foreigners, and took a great deal of notice of them. She was a German herself, and this perhaps made her feel more interest in them. I dare say she was proud that her country had produced the greatest musical genius of the age.

Wolfgang, while in London, composed six more sonatas, and dedicated them all to the Queen, who was charmed both with them and their boy-composer. He played them before her and the court, and you must try to imagine the compliments and flattery he received. I cannot tell you half. It was enough to turn his little head: was it not? Fortunately he had too sweet a disposition to be spoilt; otherwise he might have been made a most disagreeable boy, instead of what he was, a fascinating, lovable, gentle little fellow.

At last they left England and went home, where Wolfgang spent a year or two in studying and practising. Many long and sometimes weary hours he spent at the harpsichord; for you must know that even genius must work hard and long. When he was nine they started

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off again on their travels, going through France and Holland, and trying most of the organs in the churches in their route. But in Holland the brother and sister were seized with a violent attack of fever, and their father was afraid that he was going to lose his beautiful, clever children. Everybody was alarmed. 'Ah, yes!' said the wiseacres, shaking their heads; 'it is always so with those precocious children! they die young.'

But this time they were wrong, for both Wolfgang and Fredrika recovered, and went home to be nursed into complete health. No doubt their mother was very glad to have her pale little girl and boy safely at home once more.

One day a gentleman came to see them, but did not know how to address a composer and musician so celebrated and famous as Wolfgang, and yet so young. He was only a little boy after all, and it seemed very queer for an old man to be obliged to treat him respectfully. So this old gentleman thought; and yet he could not speak to him as he would do to any ordinary mischievous young urchin who could *not* compose and play wonderful music. He was very much puzzled and perplexed; but at

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last hit upon what he thought a happy medium; not too respectful, nor too familiar.

'And so *we* have been in England and France, and have been at court, and have done ourselves much honour,' he said playfully.

Now after all the fuss that had been made with Wolfgang, and the consideration with which he had been treated everywhere, this patronizing address from a mere private individual did not please him at all; he had a great deal of dignity, though he was only a child. So he answered gravely:

'Yet I never remember having seen you anywhere but at Salzburg.'

It would take too much space and time to tell you all the things done by this wonderful boy. When he was twelve he composed an opera, but by this time most of the musicians of Europe were up in jealous arms against him, and all sorts of stratagems were resorted to to prevent its appearance. It is a curious thing, but true, that great men are often very little. Instead of being delighted that such a magnificent genius had been sent into the world, as they ought to have been, these clever, renowned men were bitterly indignant that any one should be supposed to surpass them. Poor little Wolfgang bore

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their unkindness very quietly, though it must have hurt him very much. When he was thirteen he became concert-master to the Archbishop, and began to compose masses. The Pope made him a Knight of the Golden Spur, which was considered a great honour. He was also made a member of the Philharmonic Society at Bologna, a distinction only conferred on eminent composers and musicians. It was the first time a boy of thirteen had ever been admitted.

Are you tired of hearing about him? Would you rather I told you about less wonderful children: boys and girls more like yourselves? That will come in time. I have a boy in my mind's eye, now, who shall see himself in print before long. There is a little girl too, of whom I want to talk.

But one thing at a time, if you please; finish what you have begun before you go on to anything else. It will not do for us to treat Wolfgang Mozart with so little courtesy! we shall be as bad as the old gentleman, if we do.

When he was only fourteen he composed an opera, called 'Mithridates,' which was performed twenty nights running at Milan, and took the public by storm. Quite a *furore* of applause

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greeted the boy whenever he appeared, and even his captious critics began to think that after all there was something in him. There was more in him than even his most ardent admirers had imagined. As he grew older he composed some of the most magnificent music that the world has ever known—music which makes the tears rise, and the heart go up in thankfulness to the Father above, for giving us such exquisite creations.

You will be sorry to hear that Mozart died when he was thirty-six. His was not a long life, but he made the most of it. When you are older you will understand the wonderful power for good that there is in music, and how much the world owes to its great composers.

Singing is one sort of music; a very sweet one. A little girl once said, 'I have a piano inside me, and I can play on that if I have no other.' A clergyman had a number of daughters so sweet tempered and lovable that people were anxious to know how he had trained them. He replied that when he saw them cross and quarrelsome, or heard them speaking unkindly of any one, he always made them sing; they soon sang themselves into good temper. Don't you think that was a very good plan? Suppose your parents

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try it with you. I will finish this talk by telling you of a little boy who had a great many funny ways of his own. When he had been unusually naughty he used to lock himself in his own room, lie on the bed and sing the Suffrages and Psalms till he fell asleep from sheer tiredness. Sometimes he varied the performance by declaiming poetry; his audience being his sisters, who, in their various rooms, could hear every word distinctly. After a quarrel with one of them, he kept them awake far into the night with the following lines, which he repeated at short intervals with appropriate emphasis:—

> 'That vixen tongue of yours, my dear,
> Alarms your neighbours, far and near;
> 'Tis like a rolling river,
> That murmuring flows and flows for ever
> Ne'er tired, perpetual discord sowing,
> Like fame, it gathers strength by going?"

The best of it was he generally sang or declaimed himself into good temper, and woke up the next morning in as sunny a mood as any one could wish.

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TAM EDWARD.

BABIES are very troublesome things to manage, sometimes, as I dare say you know. But there are babies and babies; some give a great deal of trouble, and some give very little.

There was once a baby of whom his own mother said 'he was the worst child she had ever nursed!' He never could sit still and amuse himself with toys as other children did; his legs and arms were always at work, and his mischief days came early. When he was four months old he jumped out of his mother's arms, while trying to catch the flies buzzing in the window; that

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was while he was still in long clothes. He began to walk when he was ten months old, and walked straightway into all sorts of scrapes. Never had such a boy been seen before!

The first thing he did was to make intimate friends and playfellows of all the cats and dogs in the neighbourhood, and being sociable animals they rather liked it. But when he made advances to the ducks and hens and cocks, they clucked and quacked, and walked away, much to his disappointment. Every live thing he saw excited his curiosity; beetles, and caterpillars, worms, flies, snails, frogs! everything that could walk, creep or fly, or in fact move at all.

He was very fond of pigs. Near his house was a pig-sty, in which lived a savage old pig, named Bet, with her litter of little ones. Here this strange child used to toddle every day to look at his squeaking acquaintances through the palings. His mother told him over and over again not to go too near, because Bet was such a cross, savage old mother, that she would very likely bite his face or hands. But Tom did not care; off he used to go, and if any one said, 'Where's Tam?' the answer was always, 'O, he's awa' wi' the pigs.'

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One day Tom disappeared. He was little more than a year old, so could not have gone very far; but they could not find him anywhere. Of course the first thing they did was to look among the animals of the village; 'most likely Tam was wi' the beasts;' so they hunted over all the stables and pig-sties and hen-houses, but no Tam! Where could he be?

Some tinkers had been selling things in the village that afternoon, and somebody suggested that they had stolen Tam. Away went the uncle and three neighbours in search of the gipsies, and found their camp about three miles off. When they had told what they came for, the gipsy chief said, 'We never kidnap children;' but he told them they might go through the camp and look for themselves. Off they went, but could find no Tam! As they were passing through the camp a number of women and girls set upon them, and beat them with ropes and sticks. As they had nothing to defend themselves with, you may imagine how glad they were to escape out of that gipsy camp.

But where was Tam? Just as some more men were about to start off in another direction, in rushed a woman with Tam in her arms.

'There, woman!' she said, throwing him

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into his mother's lap; 'there's your bairn! but for goodness' sake keep him away frae yon place, or he may fare war (worse) next time!'

'But whar was he?' they all exclaimed.

'Whar wud he be but below Bet and her pigs a' night!'

He had actually spent the whole night with his friends the pigs! The wonder was that old Bet had let him come out alive. Did you ever hear of such a queer baby boy as little Tam?

Perhaps you are wondering why he was called Tam, and why his friends used such strange words. He was a little Scotch boy, and in Scotland people do not talk as we do; they have some very funny words, and some very beautiful ones of their own.

As Tam grew older his love for animals grew stronger. He was always bringing home a number of 'beasts,' as the neighbours called them. At first only such things as crabs, tadpoles, snails, and frogs; but afterwards rats, horse-leeches, hedgehogs, moles, mice, and birds of all sorts.

The neighbours complained, and no wonder. Tam's 'beasts' were always escaping and roaming into the cottages near. The leeches used to crawl up the people's legs and bite them, and

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the mice and beetles ran about the floors. He really must have been a dreadful boy, a regular young Turk!

His mother threw all his treasures away, and strictly forbade him to bring any more home. The next time he went out he came back laden! Then he was flogged.

'That will cure him,' thought his father. But no such thing. Tam brought home more 'beasts' than ever.

As a punishment he was told one morning that he should not go out all day. Only part of his clothes were given to him, and his mother tied him by his legs to the table, and then tied his wrists together. As soon as she had gone out he coaxed his little sister to help him; they dragged the table to the fire, got the rope between the bars and burnt it through, then leaving the end on fire off he went. The rope set fire to the table, and if his mother had not come in, the house would have been burnt down.

Tam was away with his frogs and rats all day, and when night came he stole home for his punishment. His father was not one to spare the rod.

Another time they locked away all his clothes, and then he went out with a petticoat tied round

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his neck and waist. When his father came home at night he said, 'Where's Tam?' No one could tell him, but soon after a neighbour came in to say he was in her house.

'O, the wickern!' said his mother; 'surely he's dead wi' cauld! Only think that he's been out a' day maist naked. We canna get him keepit frae thae beasts o' his.'

'Bring him in,' said his father, who was very angry. 'I'll chain him to the grate.' Poor little Tam crept in, wet, muddy, and miserable, looking such a comical sight in this old petticoat that when his father saw him he burst into a fit of laughter. Mrs. Edward washed her muddy little laddie and put him to bed, and the next morning he awoke ill with fever. It was more than three months before he went out again. All this happened when he was only four years old.

As soon as he could crawl out of doors off he went to his old haunts. He knew all the best nesting-places, and many a thrashing he had for stealing the nests. It seemed rather too bad to thrash such a little lad.

The people in the neighbourhood used to forbid their boys going with Tam Edward. When he asked them to go with him they would

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say, 'Wha wad gang wi' you? ye never come hame!' The fact was, Tam was a born naturalist, and nothing could destroy the feeling within him.

One day he prevailed upon a number of boys to go with him bird-nesting to a wood at Polmuir. As they were wandering about the wood, Tam saw what he took to be a byke, or bees'-nest, on a tree. This was looked upon as a great prize, and all the boys came running up to see it; but before they reached the spot one of them called out, 'O! I'm stung, I'm stung!'

Fancying that the whole swarm of bees was after them they took to their heels, and did not stop till a safe distance was between them and the byke. Then of course Master Tom wanted to return and examine the nest, but they would not be persuaded. If he went he went by himself; they were going home. So home they ran, and Tom went back alone.

After a great deal of trouble, and several stings, he managed to pull the byke off the tree; then came a puzzle: how was he to carry it home? His cap would not do; it was not large enough. I suppose he dared not go home jacketless, so there was only one thing left—his shirt! No sooner thought than done, and off

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So Home they ran, and Tom went back alone. *See page* 38.

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he started with the bees'-nest tied up in his shirt.

It was dark when he reached home, and peeping through the keyhole he saw his father sitting in his chair; he was frightened! Hiding the nest he went in, but his father took little notice of him. Nothing would probably have been known about the nest if his brother had not found out that he had no shirt on. 'Eh, mother, mother! look at Tam! he hasna' gotten his sark!' he called out. Then poor Tom was in for it! His father came up and threatened to strap him if he did not tell where his shirt was, and Tom told. He had to go and fetch it out of his hiding-place, and after pouring boiling water over it to kill the bees, his parents opened it and found a wasps' nest. So Tom had no honey after all.

When he was nearly five he was sent to school to keep him out of mischief. Do any of you bairns know what playing the truant is? I hope not practically. Tom did; instead of going to school, he used to run off to the fish-market, or the hills, or turn and spend the day looking for 'beasties.' His love for natural history was intense, and he was never happy unless out under the open sky, searching for the homes,

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and studying the habits of his feathered or furred friends. Strange adventures he had, too, when he grew older. He is a well-known naturalist now, and has taught us many wonderful things.

Before I tell you any more of little Tom Edward's adventures, I want you clearly to understand one thing; he did not get into mischief for the sake of mischief; he was not naughty out of sheer naughtiness. All his scrapes and troubles came about from a passionate and intense love of nature and the animal world. When he disobeyed his parents and played the truant, he was drawn on by this absorbing passion, which made him forget everything else. It was not right of him, but there was an excuse which I am afraid none of my little readers can urge when they do wrong. Tom forgot his parents, forgot his school, forgot to be hungry, thirsty, or tired while he was wading knee-deep in the burn, or roaming among woods and hills in search of strange and curious creatures. The fish-wives in the market used to say, 'Here comes the queer laddie,' when they saw him; and then they would ask him, 'Weel, man, fat are ye gaun to speer to-day?' (What are you going to ask to-day?) He used to ask all sorts

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of queer questions about the fish: what was the difference between them, where they came from, and so on.

He went to a girls' school first, and his schoolfellows soon began to look out for 'Tam's beasts.' The butterflies they liked, but they were terribly afraid of the ugly leeches and many-legged things which were continually crawling out of his pockets.

Like many another laddie, English as well as Scotch, Tom hated school. So often did he play truant that his grannie took him in hand and marched him off to the school-door, holding him tight all the way. Once she followed him to the burn where he was hunting for leeches: he was stooping down, and seeing her reflection in the water made a sudden bound to the opposite side of the burn, just as she was about to seize him. Of course poor old grannie fell into the water with a great splash; but Tom did not stay to pick her up. Off he ran as fast as his legs could carry him, and did not go home till night. What made it worse that time was, that he had been sent early in the morning to the baker's for rolls for breakfast, and, not coming back, grannie had gone to look for him. He ate the rolls, and I will leave you to imagine

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what his mother said to him when he went home that night.

So much trouble did he give at school, by taking his insects and his animals there, that at last the dame turned him out, and said he should come no more. Then he was sent to a boys' school, when for a little while he went on pretty well. But one day, during lesson time, one of the boys gave a loud scream and started from his seat. A horse-leech was seen crawling up his leg! and there was a bottle full of leeches in the corner of the room.

There was no difficulty in finding the culprit, and Tom was dismissed the school after having a severe blow on the back from the master's taws. Would you like to know what a taws is? It is a strap of leather, cut into tails at one end: the schoolmasters of Scotland used to use it very frequently.

What was to be done with Tom? His poor mother was in great trouble about her little 'ne'er-do-weel!' Whatever sort of a man would he make? She marched him off to the school, keeping firm hold of him all the way, to beg the master to take him back: but before she could speak the master said, 'Don't bring that boy

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here! I'll not take him back—not though you were to give me twenty pounds.'

So Tom was school-less a second time. He was ashamed of himself, and no doubt made many good resolutions, but unfortunately could not keep them. He went to a third school, and tried hard to be good, and for a time succeeded. But at last a temptation came too great to be resisted. Shall I tell you all about it?

There was a certain nest, a sparrow's nest, high up in the corner of a spout, which had long excited Tom's interest. Of course there were eggs in the nest, and he would like to have them; but they were out of his reach; he was such a little fellow; not five years old.

Every day he cast longing eyes at the coveted nest, and at last the longed-for opportunity came. Something was wrong with the spout, and workmen were sent for to put the wrong right. Tom came along and saw a man and boy place a long ladder against the house. He stopped, intending to ask them to give him the nest; but as the man was about to step up he found he had forgotten something. Sending his boy back for it, he lighted his pipe and strolled away.

Tom looked round; nobody was to be seen! Up the ladder he went, as fast as he could climb.

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Somebody shrieked at him from a window, but on he went, pulled away his prize, and hurried down again. A dangerous thing for such a little lad to do.

But instead of eggs, he found birds in the nest! five well-fledged birds! It was school-time, and he had not time to take them home; so to school they went too. He put them under his form, and for an hour all was quiet. Then came a 'Chirrup!' then another! then all the birds began together, 'Chirrup! chirrup,' and fluttering out of the nest they did their best to fly round the school-room. All the boys were after them directly, but the master ordered silence, and sent them back to their seats. Tom was called up and questioned.

'This is more of your work, Edward, is it not?'

'Yes, sir.'

'And did I not tell you to bring no more of those things here?'

'Yes, sir; but I only got them on my way up, or I wouldn't have brought them here.'

'I don't believe it,' said the master. But some of the boys had seen him taking the nest, and said so.

'Well, sir,' said the master, 'you are one of

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the most daring and determined little fellows that I have ever heard of. It seems you will follow nobody's advice. If you do not give up your tricks you will some day fall and break your neck. But as you have told me the truth I will forgive you this once. But remember it is the last time. Now go, collect your birds, and take them away.'

This was more easily said than done; all the birds except one had escaped out of the windows. Tom caught the one and went out, and in the street found two more of the little things. He went home with them, but gave them away the same day in exchange for a little picture-book, containing the death and burial of Cock Robin.

Tom was not quick at his books, and did not learn much at school. He could read pretty well, but knew little of arithmetic and nothing of grammar. He was unfortunate in having masters who could not understand him; they looked upon him as a wilful, disobedient, daring little fellow, instead of an enthusiastic little naturalist. He was only eighteen months at this last school; an unfortunate thing happened which cast him adrift once more. The master found a centipede crawling up his arm one day, and it frightened him not a little. Centipedes

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are very ugly things, and some of them are poisonous. He killed it with his foot, and called Tom to answer for its presence. But Tom knew nothing about it; he had brought no maggy monny feet, as it was called, to school. His denial only made matters worse, for he was not believed. The master gave him the taws on both hands for telling a lie, and on his back for bringing the centipede.

'Now, sir, will you say now that you did not bring it?'

'I did not, sir! indeed I did not,' said poor Tom.

'Well then, take that,' said the master, giving him a number of tremendous lashes on his back. And so he kept on till he was quite out of breath, and thoroughly exhausted; but still Tom denied the charge; he had not brought the centipede. 'Get your slate,' said the master, at last. 'Go home and tell your father to put you on board a man-of-war, as that is the best school for all irreclaimables such as you.'

So Tom was expelled from his third school, all because of his 'beasts.' He was scarcely six years old then; too young to work. His father said he would take him back to school and ask the master to try him once more. Tom had had

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beating enough; so he ran away and hid. His father went after him, but could not find him. All night, and a bitterly cold night it was, little Tom lay among some logs, shivering in his rags. He had no shoes or socks on, and very few clothes. The rats kept him awake, with their squeaking and jumping, and he was glad indeed when morning came. The first thing he saw was his father; so he kept out of sight till the coast was clear, and then ran home.

'O, ye vagaboon!' said his mother; 'where hae ye been a' nicht? yer faither's oot seeking ye. I wonder how I can keep me hands aff ye.'

But she did keep her hands off him, and when it was found that his shirt was quite hard from dried blood from his back, and was sticking to him, anger disappeared and gave way to pity. When they tried to take his shirt off the pain was so great that the little fellow fainted. They said no more about him going back to school.

There are a great many more most interesting things about this strange, clever boy, and if any of you bairns can get hold of a book called the 'Life of a Scotch Naturalist,' by Mr. Smiles, you will have a treat indeed.

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DAVY AND DOLLY.

WHAT is that Nellie is saying? Tell you about that little girl of whom I spoke recently? To be sure I will; and about her brother Davy too. I told you that I wanted to talk about them.

Dolly and Davy live in a large old-fashioned house in a large old-fashioned town. They have several brothers and sisters, but they are all grown-up; and these two little ones have the nursery and the school-room all to themselves. Their mother is dead, and sister Janet hears their lessons, and looks after their general welfare; but out of school hours they are left, very much, to Jane the nurse. They have happy times together, and make up all

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sorts of funny games and play. Sometimes Davy is a lion and runs after Dolly; and sometimes Dolly is a mouse and bites Davy's toes.

But sometimes they are very lonely, and Dolly hides her face in the cushions and cries because she 'wants mamma;' and Davy whistles very hard, and plunges his hands deep in his knicker-bocker pockets, and stares at the fire, and winks in a queer un-Davy-like way. They are only seven years old, both of them; for Davy is the same age as Dolly and Dolly as Davy. Did you ever see a little brother and sister whose birth-days were on the same day, and who were exactly the same age? 'Dolly and me are twins!' says Davy, proudly; he thinks that a wonderful thing.

Now, in the town where Dolly and Davy live there used to be no market-house. All the old women who came from the country with eggs, butter, and fowls for sale, had to sit out in the wind and rain, till some rich people thought that was not at all the right state of things, and began to subscribe to build a market-house. When they came to Davy's father he put down his name for such a large sum of money that they thought the least they could do in acknowledgment was to ask his little boy to lay the foundation stone.

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Mr. Allerton put on his considering cap; then he sent for Janet, and told her all about it.

'Davy will have to make a speech,' he said; 'can he manage it, Janet? Won't he cry?'

Janet laughed. 'Not he, he will like it; only of course he must learn his speech beforehand.'

'Of course. Well, if you think he won't be frightened, I will tell them that I am much obliged and so on, and that I consent with pleasure, eh?'

'Yes, papa,' said Janet. 'But don't make up a long speech for Davy, because I'm afraid he will not remember it. He hasn't much memory.'

Presently all the other brothers and sisters came in, and John and Ralph began to compose a grand speech for little Davy.

'Let him come down, and we will see what he can do,' said Ralph; so a message was sent up to the nursery, and in a few minutes down came Dolly and Davy, looking as bright and merry as any two little twins under the sun.

'Now then, young man,' said John, lifting Davy upon the table. 'Put your hands behind you, shut your eyes, and say after me—I, David Allerton.'

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'What for?' said Davy, wriggling out of his brother's hands.

'Be quiet, Davy, and stand still,' said sister Janet; 'Jack is going to teach you a speech. If you are a good boy you are to lay the foundation stone of the new market-house. But you must learn your speech first.'

Davy stood still, and listened with great attention and excitement while Ralph read aloud a speech, making various alterations as he proceeded.

'O, Davy,' said Dolly 'can you say all that?'

'Ever so much more,' said confident Davy. 'Begin me now, Jack.'

'Begin you, you young monkey! I'll begin you!' said Jack, looking very fierce. 'I'll eat your head first.'

'All the curls would stick in your teeth,' said Davy, not one bit frightened. 'Then you'd have the toothache dreadfully.'

'Don't play with him now, Jack; teach him,' said Janet, and Jack began in earnest.

It was not a long speech, and sister Janet had made quite a mistake about Davy's memory: he had a very good one indeed. He soon knew his lesson by heart, and every day after that he used to go down to the drawing-room, or into Jack's

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smoking-room, to repeat it: and Dolly always went with him to listen.

At last the day arrived, and Davy awoke very early. The first thing he did was to run to the window to see if it rained: the second to go into Dolly's room to see if she were awake. No! Dolly was sleeping like a dormouse.

'How dare you?' cried Davy, scarcely able to speak for indignation. 'Dolly, how dare you sleep like that to-day? Wake up this minute!'

'Yes, Davy,' said Dolly, humbly, sitting up and rubbing her eyes. 'I tried to keep awake last night, so's to be ready in time: but somehow I forgot, and my eyes got shut down, and then I s'pose I went to sleep.'

The stone was to be laid at two o'clock, and long before twelve Davy and Dolly were crazing nurse to dress them. For the sake of peace at last she gave way, and after dressing them in the new costumes bought for the occasion, she set them down on a chair, with orders not to move.

Presently up came sister Janet to see if they were ready, and then down they went and jumped into the carriage. Crowds of people were flocking up to the ground, and Davy's heart began to beat a little faster.

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'Are you frightened, Davy?' whispered Dolly, awe-struck at the sight of so many people. 'Isn't it dreadful?'

'No!' replied Davy, sharply. 'It's nice! you be quiet, Dolly!'

'Are you sure you remember your speech, Davy?' said sister Janet, anxiously.

'Of course! I've said it sixteen times this morning!'

'Now then, Davy,' said Jack, appearing at the carriage door; 'out with you! Where's your speech?'

'On my tongue?' said Davy, but he began to feel queer. He took hold of Jack's hand, and walked along a plank, and suddenly found himself standing on a raised platform, with a huge stone hanging in chains in front of him. Whichever way he looked there were faces! men's faces! women's faces! children's faces! and they were every one smiling, and looking at him! Davy wished they wouldn't.

'Now, my little lad,' said a gentleman, with a beautiful little silver trowel in his hand. 'Step up on this stone, so that they may hear you more distinctly.'

Davy stepped up, and stood like a little statue, while some gentlemen made some speeches. He

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dared not look up, but kept his eyes fixed on the stone.

'Now then, Davy!' whispered Jack: 'they are waiting for you to begin. Speak out—don't be frightened.'

'Ladies and gentlemen,' began Davy, and then stopped.

'Go on!' whispered Jack, pinching him.

'Ladies and gentlemen,' began Davy again, and then he looked up and saw Dolly's horror-struck face just in front of him.

'It is with great pleasure I stand before you to-day in this enviable position,' he went on desperately, thinking what a dreadful story he was telling. 'I may truthfully say that this is the proudest moment of my life!' Another dreadful story! 'And if—if—if!'

'O, Davy!' sobbed Dolly.

'And if you — Please, I've forgotten my speech!' said poor Davy, bravely; turning red and white by turns. 'Jack taught me a beautiful one, and I said it to Dolly before I came, but I've forgotten it all now. I am very much obliged to you for giving me this pretty trowel, and I'm so glad there is to be a market-place, because I've often pitied the poor old women sitting under their umbrellas in the rain, and looking

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so cross. I think it's enough to make them cross; and now they won't get wet, will they? So I'm glad there's going to be a nice warm market house.'

And here Davy broke down altogether, and jumping off the stone he tried to hide behind brother Jack, and could not imagine why everybody laughed and shouted 'Hear! hear!' as if they were pleased.

'Are they very angry with me?' he asked, in an odd little voice, half brave, half frightened.

'Not a bit!' said Jack. 'I think they liked your speech better than mine, Davy. Ungrateful people!'

And when Davy saw that he was laughing, he began not to care quite so much: but he was very glad to go home with Dolly.

That was Davy's first and last speech in public. When he makes another I will tell you about it.

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NORMAN AT THE BRIGHTON AQUARIUM.

HAVE any of you children ever been to Brighton? I dare say you have. Perhaps some of you live there, and know all about the Aquarium; but some of you who have never been there do not even know what an Aquarium is, so I must tell you.

The Brighton Aquarium is a large place built chiefly underground. There is first a reading-room—such a large, cool room, with a platform for the band which often plays there; and chess-tables for people who like chess, and tables covered with papers and magazines for those who like reading. Then there is a long, wide corridor, very dimly lighted from the top by coloured round windows. The sides of this

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corridor are made of glass, and you look through into caves cut in the rock. Beautiful fairy-like caves, full of clear, green-looking sea-water, with flower-like anemones—pink, white, red, purple, blue, and green—making a veritable sea-garden. Anything more lovely than these anemone-tanks would be difficult to find. There are anemones so like dahlias than naturalists have given that name to them. They are found as large as cheese-plates, and are, perhaps, the most voracious of all the anemones, eating little crabs, and every small, living thing they can reach. A gentleman once saw one draw in and eat a poor bee, who had mistaken it for a flower and ventured too near. That was not in the Brighton Aquarium, of course.

Then there are daisy anemones, and strawberries, and a most beautiful little creature called Rosy Anemone; and many more which I must leave till some future time. The next tanks contain different sorts of fishes—dog-fish, whiting, soles, plaice, herrings, and sprats; cod, salmon, and others. Enormous cray-fish, lobsters, and crabs crawl about the rocks, and strange-looking things they are, especially the king-crabs, which wear a huge shell, like an umbrella, on their backs. This covers them up completely, but

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makes them look very funny. There are nearly always people laughing at the king-crabs. The fact is, they are very silly creatures, and no amount of experience will teach them wisdom. They will try to climb the steep rock-side of their cave, or the smooth glass front. Of course they cannot do it, and over they go on their umbrella backs, to struggle sometimes for two or three hours before recovering their equilibrium. Very often a friendly brother crab will come, and by pushing his umbrella under them, give them a lift and a push over.

At the top of the corridor is the concert hall. Such a pretty place! with feathery, drooping ferns, and rocks, and waterfalls. On one side the soft-eyed, timid seals dive in and out of their own private water domain. Gentle, curious creatures, with very good appetites. The band plays on the platform, and the musical children would have a treat if they were listening.

On the other side of the concert hall is another dim corridor, and an open space with table-tanks containing curious foreign things. The funny, sharp-looking, little snapping turtles attract a great deal of attention, and no wonder. Put your finger to the tank, up comes a tiny turtle and snaps at it through the glass. No one is

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allowed to throw things into the table tanks, which are open at the top, and within easy reach; but there are always bits of biscuit or cake floating among the snapping turtles; people will throw them in on purpose to see the little creatures snap.

In this corridor is a tank which holds some strange and ugly things. Octopods they are called; but they have another name. Some years ago Victor Hugo, one of the first writers of the day, wrote a book called 'Toilers of the Sea,' and in it he told how a man dived down among some rocks, and was seized by a fearful creature, with eight long arms. There was a desperate fight, and the man won the victory. That creature was called the devil-fish! but it was really an octopod. Sometimes they grow to an enormous size. When they are angry their bodies change colour, and become a dull red. Would you like to see them fed? The keeper throws in a number of little crabs, all alive, and as the poor little things come sinking down, the octopods swoop through the water, and seize them with their long arms. Sometimes two octopods seize one crab, and there is a struggle and a fight.

At the top of this corridor is the tropical

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room, or cave, for it is cut in the rock. Here is a tank of electric eels. If ever you have a chance to touch an electric eel, take my advice, and, Don't! You will never forget it if you do touch. It will give you a shock by way of a forget-me-not which will make you jump.

In a small, dull cavern the alligators lie in a stupid, torpid condition. Wicked, ugly-looking things! They make one think of the poor men, and women, and children who have met with cruel deaths in the alligator-infested regions of Africa.

A flight of steps lead to the picture gallery; but you will not care for that. Another flight lead to the refreshment-room and balcony looking down on the Rink. No one skates on the rink now, but when they did I saw a pretty sight there. A slender, graceful little girl and her handsome brother were skating round and round, with their hands intertwined in some fanciful way of their own. Their movements were grace itself, and all sorts of pretty poetical similies came into my head as I watched them.

Now I am going to tell you a tale about the Aquarium. Once upon a time, not a long time either, a certain little boy went to Brighton with his nurse. He had no mother, but his

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father took great care of him, and loved him dearly.

Of course the first place Norman wanted to see was the Aquarium. He had heard so much about it, and read, too, for he was a great reader, and understood what he read. But Nurse said no; his father had given her strict orders not to take him into the Aquarium, as he wished to take him there himself when he came down. Norman was quite content to wait, and hurried on down to the beach. There was plenty of fun on the beach; hundreds of children, playing at all sorts of games. Norman watched them wistfully, and when some nice, gentlemanly-looking little boys asked him to join their fun, he looked eagerly at Nurse for permission, and was soon as merry and happy as any little boy on the beach.

On their way home they passed the Aquarium, and heard a noise which made Norman start. He had never heard anything like it before. It was something like a dog barking, something like a sawing-machine! Nurse said it set her teeth on edge.

'Why, it is only the sea-lions!' said one of the little stranger boys. 'Haven't you seen them? They are the queerest things in the world! Do

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come with us this evening; we are going into the Aquarium.'

Norman shook his head, and looked as miserable and disappointed as a little boy well could. Nurse took no notice, but hurried him on to dinner. From that time all Norman cared for were the sea-lions! He spent all his time loitering round the Aquarium, listening to the odd sounds within, and trying to imagine what the lions were like. His curiosity rose to boiling-pitch! What would he not give to see them? He was quite sure there was nothing else in Brighton worth seeing!

Meanwhile the bright, beautiful days were passing, and still father did not come.

'I don't believe he ever will!' said Norman, in despair. He was thinking aloud as he leaned against the rails nearest the sea-lions' house. Close to him was a gate, used by the workmen, who were making some improvements. It was shut, but not fastened, as Norman soon saw. A man came out, shut the gate after him, and walked away. There was no one near, and Norman experienced what is commonly called a temptation. Do you know what that means? Something inside him told him to slip in and see the sea-lions!

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Well, I wonder what you would have done. There was the door leading to the sea-lions' den, just a little way down the incline to the left of the gate. I think Norman could have withstood temptation if at that very moment that tantalising sawing noise had not begun! It was too much for his sense of honour. In another minute he stood, trembling with fright, inside the gate. No one had seen him, so he ran down the incline and into the lions' den. Here they were! the strangest-looking creatures he had ever seen in all his life! For half-an-hour he was so absorbed in watching them that he forgot all about the gate. He remembered at last, and stole back. The gate was locked!

Norman stood aghast! All sorts of terrible thoughts rushed into his mind! He would be sent to prison, certainly! But what else? Would they make him work the tread-mill, or pick oakum? or would they whip him with the cat-o'-nine-tails? You see he knew something about prisons.

He wandered down the incline to the right of the gate, and found himself in the dim-looking corridor. To his eyes, accustomed to the sunlight, it seemed as dark as night, so he dared not go in, but went back, and hid behind a lot

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of planks on the incline. There he put his hands over his face, and sobbed himself to sleep.

When he awoke he felt dreadfully stiff, and could not, at first, imagine where he was. When the recollection came back it made his heart give a little jump of fear, and a big lump rose in his throat. He peeped out of his hiding-place, and wondered what nurse was doing. If she had written to tell his father that he was lost! O, dear! it was getting worse and worse! Perhaps his father would come and find him. That thought gave him a little comfort; but when he remembered that it would take a long time for the news to reach his father, and another long time for his father to reach him, the comfort went away.

It was getting dark, and he could hear the merry strains of the band, and the sound of happy voices down in the Aquarium. They only made him feel more miserable and wretched. At last he summoned up courage enough to creep out to the gate again. A great many people were walking about on the top of the Aquarium, and on the road outside; but it was too dark to recognise anybody. He thought of calling some of the boys passing, and asking them to go and fetch nurse; but just as he

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decided upon asking a little knickerbockered figure standing near the gate, he heard something which made him literally jump. What was it? Only a voice:

'He left home this morning, and his nurse tells me she has seen nothing of him since. We have been all over the Aquarium, though the man at the entrance gate told us no little boy had passed.'

'O, papa! papa!' cried Norman, almost too choked with joy to speak. 'I am here! Please let me out.'

I think I need not go on much longer. Norman's father went round to the entrance gate, and fetched his poor hungry little boy out. But they had to tell the gate-keeper all about it, and Norman had to pay sixpence out of his money-box, as that was the admission fee. He went into the Aquarium afterwards with his father; but it was a very different visit.

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DISAGREEABLE CHILDREN.

'OM, come and take your father's dinner!' 'I sha'n't!'

'Tom! how dare you? your father's waiting for his dinner, and there's no one to take it but you.'

'Sha'n't!'

'You naughty boy! come this moment, or I'll make you!'

The mother looked roused and angry, and naughty Tom thought discretion the better part of valour. Perhaps she wouldn't let him have any pie for dinner if he refused to obey her; so he made a snatch at the tin pail, duck-

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ing his head to avoid the box on the ear which was aimed at him, and ran off crowing defiantly.

What a nice boy!

'Ellen, have you washed up the tea-things?'

'No!'

'Then be quick about it, for I want the table. I have to iron all these things to-night. Look alive, there's a good child.'

Ellen shrugged her shoulders, and went on reading.

'Ellen! are you going to wash up those things or not?'

'I s'pose so.'

'Then do it this moment, you good-for-nothing girl! Here's my iron hot, and the precious moments going while you are reading those rubbishing story books! I'll throw it in the fire if I catch hold of it.'

'I'll take care you don't!' muttered Ellen, slipping it in her pocket, as her mother drew near.

What a nice little girl! Wouldn't you like to know her? And wouldn't you boys like Tom for a playfellow and companion? No? Why not? O! you don't like naughty, rude, disobedient children! I am very glad to hear it.

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Then what sort of children do you like? Good, kind, gentlemanly boys, gentle, obedient, loving girls? That is right. Like them and make them your model. It is something wonderful! the number of children in the world, I mean. Go where you will there are children. Let us take a peep at some of them, beginning near home. Which way shall we turn? Any way. There are children everywhere. Look at them down that little street; they are literally swarming!

Playing, of course; but I don't understand the game; they all seem to be running against each other. There is one dark-eyed little maiden, very busy putting everybody to rights. She seems to think that her mission in life. It must be a very disagreeable one! Let me give you a piece of advice — all of you, boys and girls; don't try to put everybody to rights! Keep right yourselves, and that will help others to be so too.

There! a quarrel at last! The little dark-eyed girl has put somebody wrong who was right enough before she meddled with her. That is always the way; meddlers do more harm than good. All is tumult and confusion now. They are taking sides, and going to have

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it out in style. A regular good quarrel! hot and strong! See how much mischief one little girl can do.

We will try that boarding-school near the park. There are about thirty girls, of all ages and sizes, in the playground. Of course we shall hear no quarrels here! they are much too well-bred. There are the doctor's daughters and the lawyer's pretty little girls, and the banker's only child, with dark hair in curls below her waist, and a frock all lace and ribbons. Let us listen a little while. That is Dr. Reynolds' little girl who is holding forth to a privileged few.

'Mamma says I may choose everything myself. It is to be my party, and I may have what I like. Geraldine and I have been drawing out a plan of the supper table; see.'

'How many of the girls are you going to ask, Lena?'

'Not all!' is the emphatic rejoinder. 'I shall ask all the gentlemen's daughters, of course. I shall not ask the Greys and Williams and that set.'

O! the contempt in those last words, 'that set!'

'What, not Amy and Clara Grey!' cries one. 'The cleverest girls in the whole school!'

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'I don't care about cleverness. Their father keeps a shop. Mamma would not like me to ask them; she does not like their attending this school at all. Papa says I shall have the band to play in the garden, and there are to be coloured lamps hung on the trees. It will be lovely!'

Lovely indeed! The news flies round the playground, and soon the children draw nearer and nearer the magic circle where such fascinating things are being discussed.

'She says she sha'n't ask you and the Greys, because your fathers are tradesmen, Nora,' whispers a little busybody to one of the outsiders.

'O, indeed! as if we wanted to be invited!' is the mortified rejoinder. 'I wonder she allows Clara to sit above her in class, and take all the prizes. She should be consistent.'

The brand is thrown down, and the fire is beginning to burn.

'Never mind, Amy!' says a generous-hearted little girl. 'If she doesn't ask you and Clara and the others, I won't go. We will have a party to ourselves and be as happy as possible. Don't be vexed!'

But Amy is vexed; more than vexed. All

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this half she has been helping Lena Reynolds with her lessons, and this touch of ingratitude goes to her sensitive little heart. There will be tears on her pillow to-night. Nothing will be talked of but the party now, so we will go elsewhere. Let us see what the boys are doing.

One, two, three, four, five, six! Six boys in one family. I wonder how their mother remembers which is which. Handsome boys, and clever ones too. Look at that beautiful model of a cathedral to which Charlie is putting the finishing touches. That painting is Oliver's work: Hugh made that easy-chair. Bernard is arranging those shells and seaweed in that artistic fashion. Arthur is deep over a musical composition, and Reggie is writing the Lord's Prayer and the Twenty-third Psalm in a space no larger than a threepenny bit. No disagreement here!

'I have no objection to lending you my tools, Charlie, but I do wish you would take a little more care of them!' says Hugh, in an injured tone, as he turns out his tool-box.

'I haven't hurt them. What's the matter?'

'O, only the head off the little hammer! it is not hurt, of course!' is the sarcastic reply.

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'So it is! I forgot. Never mind, old fellow; I'll get it mended.'

'So you always say; but it is never done.'

'Well, it's a grand thing to make such a fuss about. Shove it on again, and say no more about it.'

'Exactly! that is what I complain of. You pride yourself on your good temper, but as for undoing any mischief you may do, that is quite another thing. I hate such a temper. For my own part, I like a bad temper that will allow its owner to do his duty.'

'Hallo! here's a sermon! listen lads!' says Charlie, in his most aggravating way.

'Do shut up,' exclaims Reggie, impatiently.

'You shut up,' retorts Charlie, flinging a book across the table, and accidentally knocking over the inkstand. The ink runs all over Reggie's work, and the young penman looks up with wrathful eyes.

'I didn't mean to do that, Reggie! indeed I didn't!' exclaims Charlie, really and truly sorry on seeing the mischief he has done.

'Charlie always is sorry when the thing is done,' puts in quiet Bernard. 'Too late, Charlie! You should think before you act, not after.'

'Bother!' grunts Charlie, going back to his

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model. But the pleasant atmosphere is disturbed: clouds are on every face, and it is evident that Reggie's sweet temper is tried to its very utmost.

We will try somewhere else now. That large house in the park; surely with such beautiful surroundings, the children must be models of goodness!

'What do you say, Jeannet?'

'Miss Mabel will not let me dress her, my lady. I have done everything I can to persuade her; but she is in one of her queer moods, and I can do nothing with her.'

Lady Thorley rises, with a sigh, and goes up to the beautifully kept nursery. A sulky-looking little girl, dressed in the height of fashion, is sitting in a velvet-cushioned rocking-chair, swinging her feet to and fro. A cream-coloured silk costume, with a hat to match, trimmed with a delicate pale blue feather, is lying on a chair by her side; and a dainty pair of cream-coloured boots have been kicked by the little slippered feet across the room.

'Mabel, what is all this about?' inquires Lady Thorley, with grave displeasure.

'I don't want to go out.'

'Do you think you are only to do what you

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want to do? Dr. Reynolds says you are to take exercise every day. If you are good you shall drive out with me to-morrow. To-day you must go with Jeannet. Now let me hear no more complaints. Dress her, Jeannet; I will sit here till she is ready.'

With angry, sullen face, the little girl is dressed, and then goes down and takes her place in the beautiful little phaeton at the door. She passes a procession of girls near the park gates, and about sixty envious eyes watch her out of sight.

'Papa says she is not really delicate at all,' says Lena Reynolds. 'They make such a fuss with her just because she is the only child! such nonsense!'

'Ask her to your party, Lena,' says one of the girls mischievously.

Lena colours and tosses her head, muttering something about her mamma being of as good a family as Lady Thorley.

Well, shall we go on, or have you seen and heard enough? Such disagreeable children, you say. So they are. How pleasant it must be to think you are not like any of them.

'O wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see oursels as ithers see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us
And foolish notion—.'

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'ANNIE THE GRUMBLER.'

WELL, my bairns, what are we to talk about to-day? What a pity that we have not a private letter-box all to ourselves, so that you might drop in a little note now and then, and tell me what you would like me to talk about. But then I could not please every one, and if I tried to do so I am afraid so many would be displeased that our letter-box would soon be full of complaints and grumbles.

I should be like the old man and his donkey; you know that old fable.

There are some people—boys, and girls too—who are never satisfied. They always want more than they have. Do you know any of

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them? I do; but I hope there are none among my little readers. If there are, they will grumble because I do not talk more about this, that, or the other, and instead of gathering honey from the flowers in their own garden, will sulkily settle down on a rank old weed, simply because they cannot get at the flowers in their neighbours' gardens. What very foolish children! Some of the most unpleasant people in the world are the grumblers. They are unhappy themselves, and they try to make everybody else unhappy. Nothing pleases them. If the sun shines it is too hot; if the wind blows it is too cold. Their lessons are harder than other children's lessons; they are punished oftener than any one else. They never have such nice things to eat, or such pretty things to wear as their neighbours. Nobody cares for them: if they were ill no one would come to see them; and if they died no one would care! They are always being scolded for nothing, and they are never praised when they do right!

Poor, miserable things! I feel quite sorry for them; don't you? Would you like to hear how a little girl was cured of this painful disease?

Once upon a time, a large family of children lived with their father and mother in a beautiful

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old country-house. They were rich, and had almost everything that heart could desire. The boys had a boat, and ponies, and a carpenter's workshop, besides all sorts of games. The girls had ponies to ride, and a pretty little low carriage, in which they used to take long, pleasant drives, and pets innumerable. I cannot tell you how many. They had large play-rooms indoors, and gardens of their own out of doors. There were swings and see-saws, targets, and a mimic railroad in the park. And just beyond the park was a large farmyard, where they used to have splendid games of hide-and-seek among the stacks. Now, do you not think they ought to have been a happy family? So they were, on the whole; but there was one drawback, and a very serious one. Nearly every pleasure was marred by it, and sometimes it made everybody uncomfortable. Visitors found it out to their cost; the servants declared it was enough to drive every one crazy; and the children themselves often wished it at Jericho. It was called 'Annie the grumbler.' No matter what was going on, if there were any crevice large enough for a grumble to creep in, in it crept. The rabbits and deer never came to Annie to be fed as they did to Kitty and Trot; the flowers were

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never so sweet and gay in her garden. Her pony was the stupidest in the world, and her seat in the carriage always the worst. It was no use talking to Annie the grumbler; when her mother reasoned with her she grew sulky, and said of course she was always in the wrong; if her father spoke kindly about her failing, she began to cry, and said no one loved her; if her brothers and sisters teased her, she flew into a violent rage, and wished she had never been born.

At last her mother grew seriously alarmed. She saw that unless a stop were put to it her little girl would grow up a most unhappy, miserable woman. The children's aunt was staying with her, and they put their heads together to find out some way of curing Annie the grumbler. Father was called into the council, and gave his approval of the plan. It was a very simple one, and you shall hear how it acted.

At eleven o'clock the next morning the grooms brought round the ponies, for Mr. Winslow had promised to take his little girls for a long ride. The boys were going, too, so there was quite a cavalcade.

'Come, Kitty, up with you,' said her father, helping her into the saddle.

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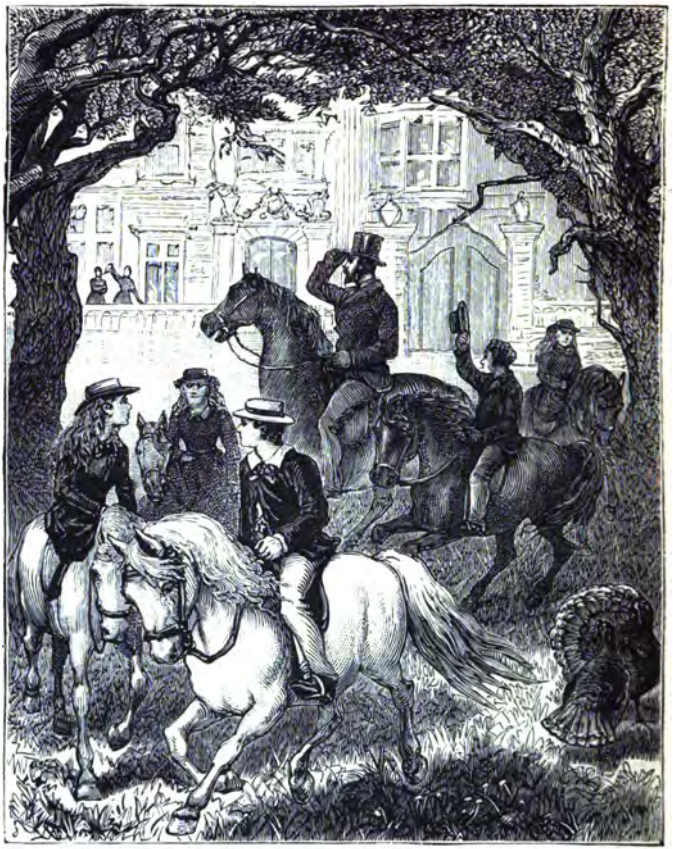

THEY SET OFF, MAMMA AND AUNT MARY WATCHING THEM OUT OF SIGHT.

See page 81.

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'I am the eldest, papa!' said Annie. 'You ought to help me first.'

'I beg your pardon. Come down, Kitty,' said Mr. Winslow, lifting Kitty down, and helping Annie up. Kitty looked puzzled, Annie triumphant.

When all were mounted, they set off, mamma and Aunt Mary watching them out of sight. In a few minutes back came Mr. Winslow and Annie.

'What is the matter?' said mother, anxiously. 'Is Annie ill?'

'No,' replied papa, coolly, lifting Annie down. 'Only her pony is not so fleet-footed as Trot's, so I must sell it. Take Miss Annie's pony to Wade, and tell him to sell it, James. Good-bye, my dear.'

Off he galloped to join the rest, and Annie rushed up to her own room in a passion of sobs. There her mother followed her, and found her crying as if her heart would break.

'I only said Prince went faster than Brownie,' she sobbed, in answer to her mother's questions, 'and now my own dear little pony is to be sold. It is cruel of papa!'

All that day she stayed in her own room, and would not speak to any one. The next day she

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felt a little better, and came down; but when Kitty and Trot started off for their ride on their pretty ponies, and she had to go for a quiet drive in the carriage with her mother, her tears broke out again.

With a broad grin on his face, James came to the house that evening, and told them all that Wade had found a purchaser for Miss Annie's pony. Poor Annie cried herself to sleep that night, though Trot put her arms round her and kissed her, and promised to go shares with Prince.

For several days Annie was so quiet and sad that they scarcely knew her. Instead of playing with the others, she used to go off by herself and cry; for she had loved her pretty pony dearly.

'It is a hard lesson,' said her father. 'But if it cures her of her great fault, the hardness does not matter. She is too dear a child to be spoilt by such a failing.'

All her brothers and sisters were sorry for her; and at first it was thought that this one lesson was enough. But in a few days Annie began to get over the loss of Brownie, and then her voice was heard in its usual grumbling key. The whole family were going to a grand fête in a park some miles off. Papa, who liked to drive

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his own magnificent horses, was on the box, with little Guy beside him. Mamma and Aunt Mary sat facing the horses, with Maud between them; and the three little girls sat opposite. It was a roomy family carriage, and no one was really crushed at all; but Annie fidgetted and exclaimed and grumbled, till at last her mother's patience was exhausted.

'Why do you fidget so, Annie?' she said. 'You make us all uncomfortable.'

'It's so horrid—all three on one seat,' grumbled Annie. 'It's so hot, and Trot digs her elbows in my side.'

'It is no worse for you than for us,' remonstrated Kitty, while Trot drew in her elbows. 'You make it hotter by fidgetting so.'

'Yes, it is worse for me—I'm older and bigger than you. Besides, your sunshade is green, and mine is blue, and that makes it cooler for you. I can scarcely breathe.'

'Papa,' said Mrs. Winslow, 'will you kindly stop the horses for a minute.'

'What is the matter?' said papa, drawing rein and looking back.

'Annie is so uncomfortable and hot and squeezed where she is, that she can scarcely breathe. As I do not wish her to die from

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asphyxia, she must come and sit here, and I will take her place. Come, my dear.'

'O, mamma,' cried Annie, aghast. 'I don't want to take your place.'

'But I do wish it; so come at once, and don't keep the horses standing.'

Not daring to disobey, Annie changed seats, and with a choking sensation in her throat, leaned back in the corner, while her mother sat down between Kitty and Trot, who made themselves as small as possible to give her room.

'Now, are you satisfied, Annie?' asked her father, coldly; and without waiting for a reply, drove on.

But the worst was to come. As they drew near the park, carriage after carriage overtook them, and the various occupants leaned out to exchange greetings with the Winslows. You may imagine their astonishment on seeing Mrs. Winslow sitting with her back to the horses, and the general thought was that Annie must be ill.

'I hope your daughter is not ill,' said Lady Carlingford, politely; and so said everybody.

But Mrs. Winslow answered cheerfully, 'My little girl was so uncomfortable, that I took compassion on her, and we changed seats. She is quite well, thank you.'

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By the time they alighted in the park, Annie's face was not fit to be seen; so she stole away among the trees to cry all by herself. Trot found her out of course—Trot always did, and coaxed her to come and see the children racing. But it was a miserable day. Annie never forgot it.

There were so many people round when they started for home, that Mrs. Winslow had not the heart to force her poor little daughter into that conspicuous corner; so she allowed her to take her place with Kitty and Trot.

'Well, Nancy,' said her father, as he lifted her out; 'are you too tired for a stroll under the limes with me?'

'O no, papa,' said Annie, eagerly; a walk with papa was always a treat. So they walked up and down in the moonlight, under the sweet-scented limes, and Mr. Winslow spoke so kindly to his little girl about her one great failing, that she saw it as she had never seen it before, and made some very brave resolutions.

Nothing was said about that carriage drive: not even by the mischievous boys who so loved to tease. Kitty and Trot took turns to lend Annie a pony; but they missed their happy rides together.

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Of course Annie was not cured all at once, I cannot tell you all that happened to her; but I will tell you something more about her, and her adventures; for she had many before she left off grumbling.

You would like to hear how she was cured, would you not? Well, she was very much better for a long time after that drive. Trot, who was her favourite sister, said she was sure she was cured; but Trot's loving eyes could not see quite clearly. She always saw the bright side of things; some little girls do. No one was ever cross long with her, she would not let them be. The boys used to say, 'It is no use being cross with Trot, she makes us laugh and forgive her. A jolly little thing is Trot.'

Of course Trot was not her real name; she was christened Madeleine, but no one ever called her anything but Trot, and Trottie.

But you must not think she was perfection; on the contrary she was one of those good children who do wrong sometimes, of whom I spoke a long time ago. Many a trick she played her brothers, making them vow a vengeance which they never took.

All through Annie's troubles she was her staunch friend and comforter. She cried over

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all the punishments almost as much as Annie herself, and begged her to leave off grumbling for ever. But poor Annie could not! That would be too much to expect all at once; she tried very hard, but often forgot. One day they were playing hide-and-seek in the farmyard, and Mr. Winslow came down to see what was going on. He found Annie sitting on a wagon-shaft, looking as cross and sulky as it was possible for a little girl to look. She said that is was her turn to seek, but that they had hidden themselves so securely that she couldn't find them, and, what was more, she should not try. Her father listened, and then went and found all the hiders.

'Now,' he said, 'I am going to hide Annie, and you shall all try to find her.' He took her to a corner of the stackyard where there was a gigantic stack standing by itself. A ladder was leaning against it, and Annie easily ran up and hid herself in the loose straw.

'Now then,' said her father, 'I am going to take the ladder away, and place it where none of the boys can reach it. There is no other ladder long enough to reach the top of this stack, so Annie, for once, you may have your revenge by hiding where no one can find you.'

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Annie did not like the tone in which this was said at all; she did not understand it quite. But she understood it only too well when more than an hour passed and no one came to take her down. The merry voices died away in the distance, and she was left alone in the yard. At least she thought so; for she had no idea that Trot was lying in the barn on the soft hay, crying as if her heart would break.

It was a beautiful warm summer evening, and at first Annie rather enjoyed her cosy nest, but she soon grew tired, and began to wish that papa would come and take her down. She could hear the church clock strike the hours, and when she counted eight strokes she began to be frightened. Suppose papa had forgotten her! she would have to stay there all night.

While she was quietly crying she heard a tearful voice whisper, 'Annie,' and there was Trot on the top of a neighbouring stack; a lower and smaller one. 'I must go now, Annie!' she said, forlornly. 'Mamma has sent for me. Don't be frightened! papa will be sure to come soon.'

She kissed her hand and went off, leaving Annie very desolate and miserable. The stars came out, and a nightingale began to sing in a

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tree close by, but still no one came to take her down.

Can you imagine her feelings? If you can it will do you good, I dare say. She was much too proud to shout for help; but she could not help the tears coming, they would and did; very fast, too!

At last she heard a footstep crossing the yard, and drawing near her prison stack; and then there was a rustling as if a ladder were placed against the stack—and then her father's voice said, 'Well, Nancy, have you had enough hiding?'

She did not speak: shall I tell you why? Her voice was too full of tears, if you know what that means. She walked home very soberly, and went up-stairs to bed, where she found Trot waiting to comfort her as usual. It was a long, long time before anybody heard Annie grumbling again: indeed, Trot said it was not fair that they were allowed to grumble a little, except poor Annie!

Everybody noticed the change: the servants said it was of some use to try to please Miss Annie now; her brothers found out that she was 'a jolly little thing!' and liked to have her with them. Rides and drives were pleasant now that

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no grumblers interfered with them; and need I say that Brownie found his way back to the stable and to his dear little mistress?

'They were dreadful punishments, dear,' said Trot, sympathetically and consolingly; 'but never mind; they have made you such a darling.'

And this was quite true; with the exception of that one bad habit, Annie was a dear little girl: generous, and loving, and forgiving. What a good thing that she was not allowed to spoil herself; was it not?

If you bairns are not happy and cheerful while you *are* bairns, I am sure I do not know when you intend to be. Look at the kittens and lambs, how playful and merry they are. Yes, but the old cats and sheep are not: remember that. When you grow old you will find much more trouble in the world than you know of now. Many old people would give the world to be young again: to begin life at the beginning: they would act so differently.

Be wise, my bairns, and act wisely now. Get all the sunshine you can out of life, and do not court the clouds. Be cheerful and happy, and lay up sunshine for dark and dreary days. Mental sunshine can be bottled and kept till wanted;

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and some day or other you will be glad you have some handy.

There are grumbling boys as well as grumbling girls. And grumbling grown-up people, too, you say. So there are, unfortunately: but you must remember that they were grumbling children first. It is a very rare thing for a happy, cheerful, contented child to grow up a grumbler. You must begin as you intend to go on.

I am more anxious for you bairns to be cheerful and contented, because I know that it is a habit not easily learned by grown-up people. And how unhappy it makes every one to grumble. You watch and see if it does not. I never knew a happy grumbler yet; neither did you. I suppose Cain was the first grumbler, unless Eve grumbled at not being allowed to eat the fruit. Perhaps she did. We read of a great many grumblers in the Bible. Can you find any of them out?

I took up an American periodical called 'St. Nicholas,' the other day, and saw some verses that I thought would be just the thing for you bairns. They were written by a little girl only ten years old, and I want you all to learn them.

The little girl's name is Dora; she and her sister Elaine live in a large isolated farm, called 'Sky

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Farm,' where they learn all sorts of beautiful things from nature, and write down their thoughts in verse. This is what Dora thinks about grumblers :

HIS YOUTH.

His coat was too thick, and his cap was too thin,
He couldn't be quiet, he hated a din ;
He hated to write, and he hated to read,
He was certainly very much injured indeed ;
He must study and work over books he detested,
His parents were strict, and he never was rested ;
He knew he was wretched as wretched could be,
There was no one more wretchedly wretched than he!

HIS MATURITY.

His farm was too small, and his taxes too big,
He was selfish and lazy, and cross as a pig!
His wife was too silly, his children too rude,
And just because he was uncommonly good.
He never had money enough or to spare,
He had nothing at all fit to eat or to wear ;
He knew he was wretched as wretched could be,
There was no one so wretchedly wretched as he!

HIS OLD AGE.

He finds he has sorrows more deep than his fears,
He grumbles to think he has grumbled for years ;
He grumbles to think he has grumbled away,
His home and his fortune, his life's little day ;
But alas! 'tis too late—it is no use to say,
That his eyes are too dim, and his hair is too grey ;
He knows he is wretched as wretched can be,
There is no one more wretchedly wretched than he!

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What a clever little girl to write such a piece as that. Yes, and what a sensible little girl to think such thoughts about the grumbler! What a good thing it is that though we cannot all be clever and write poetry, we can be sensible and cheerful and wise.

Will you try to chase away the evil spirit of grumbling when next he pays you a visit? Ask the sweet-voiced, white-winged angel of contentment to come instead, and whatever you do do not chase her away by mistake. Remember what the Apostle says: 'Godliness with Contentment is great gain,' and take it as your motto.

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I AND MINE.*

PEOPLE used to say we were a queer family, and I am sure they were right. We surprised even ourselves sometimes.

There were ten of us—boys and girls. Hugh and Thorald came first—well-grown, handsome young fellows they were too—aged respectively sixteen and seventeen at the time of which I am going to write. I came next, and then Edda and my boy Bert, the quiet one of the family. He was delicate, and could not rough it as we did, and, I suppose, that was the reason we thought so much of him; he was a sort of

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family pet, privileged to do and say anything. Next to him came the two most troublesome youngsters that ever lived—Murrel and Madge. Twins they were, and as full of mischief as a couple of imps. Then came merry little Thyra, Thorald's plaything and pet; and we finished off our list with Toddy and Teddy, rollicking, jolly little lads, full of life and spirits, and afraid of nothing.

We were poor, of course—people with ten children generally are. How the mother managed to turn us out in decent rig on Sundays I don't know. Money was a scarce commodity in our house, and frocks and jackets were not to be had for the asking.

Our father did not trouble his head much about us. If we kept out of his way he was satisfied; and seeing that he spent most of his time in the laboratory, making experiments, we found it an easy matter.

We used to think he was trying to make diamonds, and with great faith looked forward to the time when a few facsimiles of the Koh-i-noor would bring us unlimited wealth; but that was when we were very young; I am afraid our faith soon took to itself wings. Still there was a certain amount of mystery attached to the

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laboratory, which had an effect on us all, even our mother.

Poor mother! she was always hopeful. I believe in her heart she thought he would make some grand discoveries which would place his name on the tiptop of fame. He never did.

We had a pretty wild time of it, we young ones. Every morning Hugh, Thorald, and I, went to be tutored by the curate. I think we taught him as much as he taught us. As Hugh said, it was a fair exchange—living deeds for dead languages. Still we got on pretty well, because we knew we must study or lose our chance in life.

In turn we tutored the younger ones; I taking Bert, and Hugh Murrel. I did not envy Hugh. The girls said lessons to mother, a governess being an unattainable luxury.

It was a good thing for us that our isolated old house stood far from the habitations of our more civilized neighbours.

Old Lansel Castle was the nearest place of any pretension, and it was three miles off; besides, there were no young ones there. There were plenty a little further on, at Lansel Manor, where Mr. Winterton, our county member, lived; but we had met, and found each other uncongenial.

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They were civilized, and we were not; at least, that is what Thorald said, and I fancy he was right. Anyhow, they kept their side of Lansel town and we kept ours.

Fortunately for us our house was one of those fascinating labyrinthine houses which are going out of fashion. It was very large and very old; there were staircases in odd corners; rooms within rooms; closets where no one dreamed of finding them; and attics shrouded in mystery. Those attics were our especial property.

From the windows we looked straight over the little fishing village to the Channel waves and cliffs and beach. We used to sit there and watch the storms when we were too tired or lazy to go out.

Many and many an hour we used to spend there, harrowing each other's feelings with the most awful ideas we could remember, or imagine. We took it in turns, and the one who made our blood run chill the most was dubbed 'Dux.' Madge used to try her hand, and send us into fits of laughter. Finding she could not manage the awe-inspiring, she used to grow wild, and launch out into frantic absurdities which were more than we could stand. How she thought of the things I can't make out. She was a clever little thing after all.

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One day there was a row at the dinner-table; something about money matters. As usual, our father looked like a thunder-cloud, and we were all on our good behaviour. But I don't think one of us escaped except Bert. Thorald and Madge got the worst of it, and Thorald left the room in a rage. We found him afterwards up in the attic, calmly eating bread and cheese.

It was a wretched day, cold and wet, and we grouped ourselves disconsolately in the low, broad window-seat, and watched the breakers. The curate had gone home for a week, so we had holiday, and were thrown upon ourselves for amusement all day.

'I'm not going to stay here all the afternoon,' said Hugh. 'It's enough to drive a fellow crazy. Thorald, put up your book, and say something, do!'

'I've nothing to say,' muttered Thorald.

Putting his foot under the book, Hugh gave it a kick which sent it spinning across the room.

Thorald's face looked dangerous. 'Do that again,' he said, quickly going after it.

'Pray don't quarrel!' said Edda; 'it is quite bad enough without that, Hugh.'

'Why can't he be sociable, then,' growled Hugh, whose temper was easily roused and as

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easily quieted. 'I hate books. Let Thorald poke his nose in a book and he cares for nothing and nobody. What's the Commonwealth to him or he to the Commonwealth?'

'Now then!' cried saucy Madge, 'go on, boys, quarrel away for the edification of the Commonwealth. Hit him again, Thorald.'

'Do be quiet, Madge,' said Bert; 'you always mend matters, *you* do!'

Thyra crept up to Thorald, and looked in his face beseechingly. 'Tell us a tale, Thor; it is the miserablest day!'

'Catch him telling tales!' scoffed Hugh. 'Not if his highness knows it! Look at his scowling face; that tells tales if he will not. Come away, for pity's sake, Thyra!'

Thorald made no reply, but we, who understood the signs, knew how to interpret the silence. A quarrel between the two was no common occurrence, and always brought dismay into the Commonwealth.

'Guy,' said Thorald, coolly, rising, and throwing down the book, 'I'm off to Lansel. Come along, old fellow.'

He ran down-stairs, and I went after him. Hugh opened the window, and shouted after us as we went down the drive—'Get the eruption

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over on the moor, Thorald! Guy, look out for yourself, my boy.'

'Witty as usual,' said Thorald, with a contemptuous smile. 'What a fool the fellow makes of himself.'

Lansel was our market-town; a busy little town as a rule, but quiet enough in the drizzle and cold east wind. It was getting dark when we had finished buying our fishing-tackle, but the rain had stopped. As we passed the principal bookseller's shop, I remembered that Hugh had ordered some periodicals which were to be down from London that very day.

'Stop a minute,' I said, 'I'll run in and fetch Hugh's papers.'

Thorald put his hand on my arm. 'Look you here, Guy,' he said, slowly. 'If you touch those papers you will go home alone.'

From any one else such a speech would have roused me to instant opposition, and I should have gone home alone. From Thorald it was different. I was angry with Hugh, and not at all inclined to quarrel with Thor on his account. The fact was I sympathized with old Thorald, knowing too well the effect produced on his temper by Hugh's aggravating chaff.

Just at the corner of the street a man ran

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past us, breathless and excited. 'Now then!' cried Thorald, 'don't knock a fellow down. What's up?'

An inarticulate gasp, which we took to be 'Fire!' turned our steps at once, and away we dashed in the direction of the engine-house.

'Where is it?' I shouted.

'Over at Blackthorpe!' shouted Thorald, turning his head, and seeing the red light just showing between the church and the mill. 'Is it the farm or the ricks?'

'The house, and there's no one there!' gasped the messenger, pulling up. 'Look alive, sir! I'm dead beat! There's a lot of little 'uns in the house!'

We flew over the ground, shouting 'Fire!' at the top of our voices. In a minute the street was alive; and Gunton, who had the key of the engine-house, came rushing out of his shop with a hot muffin in one hand, the key in the other.

I remember noticing, even in all the excitement, the fling he gave that muffin when Thorald cried, 'There are children in the house, Gunton!'

The cry went round like wildfire; and some of the women began to cry, with excitement, I

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suppose. We had the doors open in a moment, and a hundred hands were on the engine. In the confusion and crowd I lost sight of Thorald. I tried to struggle on the engine, but there wasn't room, and I turned to make a run for it. The crowd was making way for a vehicle; and glancing up as I passed, I recognised old May, our family doctor. Without waiting for an invitation, I sprang into the gig, and tumbled down on his knee.

'Hallo, young gentleman!' he said, quaintly. 'Is this your gig or mine?'

'Mine, while I'm in it,' I answered, too excited to think what I was saying. 'There are children in the house, Dr. May!'

The people had to look out for themselves after that! We dashed through as fast as whip could make old Forrest go.

Blackthorpe was an old farm-house on the moor between Lansel and our house, but far away to the right. We knew it well. There were a whole tribe of children there, of all ages; funny little white-haired rabbit-like things, running away at the sight of a stranger.

There was a near way across the fields by which the people went. When we got round by the road we found a crowd there. Fortunately

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there was plenty of water close at hand, and the firemen were no bunglers. The first cry that greeted us was 'They are all out, sir.'

I recognised the voice, and jumped down. 'Sure and certain, Thomas?'

'There's the missus and all the children in the barn safe enough, Master Guy. The missus be mortal bad with fright.'

'Then I'll go there first,' said Dr. May. 'Take Forrest out of this crowd, John, and wait for me.'

Dr. May went on to the barn, but I went to the engine. I didn't want to see a lot of crying women and children. The men were at work vigorously, but it was too soon for any visible effect. The flames mounted higher, and the poor old place seemed doomed. In the crowd I came across our Madge, with no hat on, and only a little shawl on her bare shoulders.

'You naughty child, go home directly!' I said, laying violent hands on her. She shook me off, her big eyes all alight with excitement.

'I sha'n't! Guy, I've been to the barn, and the children are *not* all there! there are two away. O, Guy, do you think they are in the fire?'

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I stared at her. 'What do you know about the children?' I said, stupidly enough.

'I know them all, and I can't find Bob and Willie!' she said, almost wild with excitement, and something else. 'Find them, Guy! O, find them! they'll be burnt to death!'

At that moment a man came dashing past, knocking the people right and left, as if they were so many sticks. It was Wright himself, the master of the farm; and one glance at his face told me that Madge was right. All the children were *not* out.

Away I went after Wright, with Madge holding tight to my coat. It was no use ordering her home; she wouldn't go. Round the side of the house we stopped, and looked up. There under the eaves was one of those insane little holes you sometimes see in such houses, filled in with a couple of panes of thick green glass; and pressed closely against the panes were two little white faces.

'There, there!' shrieked Madge, and poor Wright threw up his hands. He seemed to lose all sense in a moment.

Some of them ran for a ladder, but when they brought it they didn't know where to put it. What was the use of getting to that hole in the

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wall? they couldn't drag the boys through it. Wright came to himself then, and helped to drag the ladder round to the back, where a larger window opened on the landing, close to the door of the children's room.

With Madge clinging to me I couldn't get near, but from the distance I saw some one run up the ladder and disappear through the broken window.

I managed to drag Madge out of the crowd and lift her on a farm wagon, out of the way of danger. I stood on the shaft beside her, and there we watched the two little white figures passed out of the window, one by one, to the man on the ladder, and by him to those below.

'Why don't he come out himself?' exclaimed a man by my side. 'The smoke hasn't choked him, has it?'

'Who is it?' I asked.

And, without turning his eyes from the burning house, he answered, 'One of the young Mr. Waldersons. Look! Baker's lifting him out of the window!'

Madge screamed, 'O, Guy! it's Hugh! He's dead!'

She clung to my arm frantically; but I was in no mood to be gentle, and shook her off. How

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I got to the place I don't know; the people made way, I suppose. I saw Dr. May kneeling by a figure on the grass, and the next moment I was by his side. It was not Hugh, it was Thorald.

'Don't touch him,' said old May, hastily.

I drew back my head with a gasp. 'Is he dead?'

'No such thing! but he's burnt. What do you want to crowd round for?'

They drew back at once, and then some one brought a rug.

'Now,' said May, 'I want some one as strong as a lion, and as gentle as a lamb. Guy, you had better go and tell your mother, and have a bed ready. Don't frighten her; say that Thorald is hurt, but there is nothing to be alarmed at.'

His words were reassuring enough, but as I bent over poor old Thor's blackened face my heart sank. As I passed the wagon I thought of Madge; but she wasn't there. Catch her staying by herself in a place of safety. As I jumped over the last gate I met our mother, her face as white as a sheet. She would have passed me, but I took hold of her arm. 'Mother,' I said, 'May wants you to have everything comfortable for poor old Thorald; he's hurt, and

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will want no end of nursing.' It was the best thing I could think of saying. By the look in her face I knew she thought he was dead, and my words—old May's message—told her the truth.

'O, Guy, don't deceive me!' she cried piteously; 'I'd rather know the worst. Isn't my boy dead? My Hugh! my poor Hugh!'

'Hugh!' I echoed, staring at her. 'What's the matter with Hugh?'

'Madge saw him,' said a voice in the darkness, and Edda stole up, 'she said he was dead, Guy.'

'Madge! little mischief!' I cried, angrily. It was a good thing for Miss Madge that she wasn't within reach. I never felt so tempted to box any one's ears in my life. 'Little idiot! she knows nothing about it, mother. It's Thorald, and May says there is nothing to be alarmed at.'

The children were all crying in the hall, with old Janet the cook keeping guard over them. Everything was at sixes and sevens. Edda, like the sensible little thing she was, marched all the younger ones upstairs. Bert went after them, to keep them quiet, and let Edda come down to help mother. Just like Bert, that was.

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In a short time Thorald was lying on the bed in the west room. May nodded cheerfully to me, as he slit up the burnt coat-sleeve.

'We shall save his beauty after all, Guy; it would be a shame for such a face to be spoilt, wouldn't it?'

He sent me down to the kitchen with an order, and when I came back I saw Hugh standing at the hall door. I went up and looked at him in amazement. His face and hands were black with smuts and smoke, his hair was singed, and there was about him a strong smell of burning wood.

'Were you there?' I cried. 'Are you burnt?'

He jerked his thumb in the direction of the west wing. 'Is he dead or dying?'

'Neither; he isn't seriously hurt, May says. Go and wash, and then come in.'

There was a curious look on his face as he turned away. I was too busy thinking of Thorald to take any notice; and if I had not been I should only have thought he was worrying; he and Thor were awful chums generally.

I went back to the room, and found Thorald quietly watching the doctor's operations. He did not speak, but gave me a smile as I took my place at May's right hand, ready to be made

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useful. Mother had washed the smoke from his face, and he looked himself again. Presently the door opened, and Hugh stole in. Light as his tread was, I fancy Thorald knew it, and half turned his head.

'I got the eruption over on the moor, old fellow,' he said with a curious tremor of the lips, half a smile, half something else.

Hugh dropped down on a chair, and burst out crying like a baby. Old May ordered him out of the room in double-quick time.

Poor old Hugh! I knew then that he was thinking of his parting words to Thorald. In the midst of trouble things will suggest themselves in a comical light. It suddenly struck me, that with all this row going on in his own house, my father was probably sitting calmly in his laboratory making experiments.

The thought came to mother at the same time, and she beckoned me out of the room. 'Some one ought to tell your father, Guy. I cannot leave my poor boy,' she said, anxiously.

'Where's Madge,' I said; 'if she is not locked up he knows.'

'No, my dear; Bert would not let her go; he is with the children.'

I ran upstairs and along the long corridor,

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which separated the south wing from the rest of the house. Double doors, covered with baize, shut out my father's rooms, and kept them free from all noise. I knocked at the door, and went in. He was standing at a table, absorbed in a couple of jars, some bottles, and a dish of water, and put up his finger warningly.

'Father,' I said, bluntly; 'mother did not care to leave Thorald herself, so sent me to tell you that he has met with an accident, and is hurt.'

'I always said he would meet with an accident,' was the irritable reply. 'What has he been doing now?'

'Saving two of Wright's boys from being burnt to death. May is with him.'

'Burnt! what business had they near a fire? and how came Thorald there?' said my father, looking bewildered.

I told him as graphically as I could, making much of Thor's courage, of which I felt as proud as if it were my own. On my way back I looked in the nursery, and found the two little ones asleep on the rug, Murrel and Madge quarrelling fiercely, and Thyra sobbing in Bert's arms.

'Murrel says I had no business to rush home with bad news that wasn't true!' cried Madge,

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appealing to me. 'He says I'm a horrid little raven, full of croak.'

'So you are,' maintained Murrel, angrily, and, worse still, contemptuously.

Madge could stand anything but Murrel's contempt. 'Am I, Guy?' she said with the suspicion of a sob in her voice.

'Yes,' I replied, severely, thinking this too good an opportunity to be lost. 'You are worse than a raven, because you profess to have sense. I'd like to shake you well, and tie you to the bed-post for a week.'

This, from me, checked Miss Madge's tears, and made her look daggers at me. Murrel seized the advantage, and I saw I might safely leave it in his hands.

Thyra came trembling from Bert's tired arms to mine. 'Murrel has been downstairs, and to the west room door to listen lots of times,' she said, nestling down. 'He says Thor will soon be well.'

'So he will. Dr. May has made him nearly well already. Cheer up, little April. Thorald will want nothing but sunshine, remember.'

Little April was her family nickname. I don't know who gave it her in the first place; but it

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stuck to her, as nicknames sometimes do; it suited her so well.

'May I go and wish him good-night? I won't make a bit of noise!' she said, imploringly. 'Do please let me, Guy! I know I sha'n't go to sleep if I don't see him!'

She began to cry again; and Bert said, 'She is so tired and exhausted with crying, poor little thing! Couldn't you carry her in, and just let her see Thor, Guy? She has been crying to see him this last hour.'

I dared not say yes without permission, though I wanted to carry her off there and then; so I stole back to the west room, and asked May if it would hurt Thorald.

'Will she cry?' he asked, suspiciously.

'Not she; I'll answer for her.'

'Then let her come, but keep her out of sight.'

I ran back, and brought her in, whispering strict orders all the way. She was as quiet as a mouse, and looked at the top of Thorald's head, which was all she could see, with such wistful love that I could not help giving her a silent kiss. May looked up, and I always say his eyes told the secret, for Thorald immediately said, 'Little April.'

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I took her round then—May told me to—and let her kiss Thor. She did not cry, but just smiled down into his eyes. After that she went to bed quietly enough.

It was a long time before Thorald was out again. His burns gave more trouble than May had expected, and caused him some anxiety.

All the neighbourhood was praising our Thorald, and we were all as proud as peacocks over it.

'Of course,' I overheard Murrel say, loftily, 'a Walderson must be brave; the Waldersons always were.'

Wright came up with the two boys to thank Mr. Thorald; but he couldn't get out a word, when the mother went, and told him Thor was not well enough to see him. He tried to speak, but broke down in a sob, and then the boys began to cry of course! I got out of the way, so I don't know how it ended.

There was a subscription got up to help Wright to rebuild his ramshackle place; and I often told him afterwards that the fire had been his best friend. The new house was better than the old.

Hugh took upon himself the office of head nurse, and developed quite a new phase of

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character. He was always devising some fresh amusement for the invalid, and never seemed tired. But with all our care they were weary days for Thorald, and tried his patience pretty well.

Madge began to boast that she was the one to bring the news; but Murrel put an end to that. What he said I don't know, but never again did any one hear the subject broached by Miss Madge.

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VOLNEY BEKNER.

It is not an easy thing to imagine how children only two years old can earn their own living. There are children in England who begin work very early; the little match-box makers for instance, who begin to work before they are four. A hard life they have, poor little things. Plenty of work and no play, and very little food to eat. Think of that, my little readers. I am going to talk to you to-day about two clever, interesting little Italian beggars. There are in Italy a great number of beggars, especially at Naples. They have no home, no regular work, and very few

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clothes. In the summer time they sleep in the porches of the churches, or anywhere else where there is a roof to cover them. An idle, worthless class of people, lounging about in the sunshine, begging from every stranger who passes, and making very free remarks about things which do not concern them in the least. Lazzaroni they are called.

Among these lazzaroni was one who was not quite so idle and lazy as the others. He was a musician, and could play well on the flageolet. People liked to hear him, and then, as was only right and just, gave him money in return for the pleasure he gave them.

He had two little boys, twins; clever, musical little lads, who learnt to play when only two years old. As soon as they had obtained sufficient proficiency, their father took them about the country with him, carrying them in a curious fashion. He had a large cloak made, with two huge leathern pockets, one on each side, into which he slipped the little fellows. They were quite comfortable in their novel conveyance, and were as merry and happy as possible.

When they came to a village, or town, or large city, they would stop in some public place, and the father would begin to imitate the notes

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of birds on his flageolet. When a crowd had collected to listen, for Italy is a music-loving country, the children would spring out of the pockets, climb up to his shoulders and join with their tiny flageolets. Everybody was delighted, and the musical trio began to grow famous.

The daughter of an Italian nobleman was going to be married, and her father wished to have something quite novel to entertain the wedding guests. Sending for the two little boys, he had them placed in the middle of a thicket of roses, which was the centre ornament of the table. A number of birds were imprisoned with them, which at a given signal they were to release.

The guests arrived, and admired the beautiful, sweet-scented roses; the breakfast proceeded, when suddenly a nightingale burst into song from the thicket! Everybody was astonished, but more so when another little sweet-voiced bird succeeded the nightingale, and then another and another, and at last the birds themselves flew out and alighted on the guests.

After this had happened twice, the branches separated, and disclosed the tiny musicians, who had been making all those sweet sounds on their flageolets.

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This was such a success that the father determined to take his children to England.

You will wonder why so many clever children have been brought to England. It is because the English have the character of being rich and generous, and always ready to patronise genius. So London soon had these delicate little foreigners in its smoky streets.

They created a great sensation! Everybody wanted to hear and see them. They played at the theatres and concerts; went to the royal palace, and to the mansions of the nobility. Money was heaped upon them, and the poor Neapolitan lazzaroni became rich, even wealthy.

They lived in a beautiful home and had everything they wanted. When they went out it was in a luxurious carriage, and their dress was the richest that could be bought. Was not that a wonderful change? I dare say they often looked back upon the days when they had roamed about under the blue sky of Italy, barefooted and bareheaded, scarcely knowing where their next meal was to come from.

But the cold, changeable climate of England did not suit the children, and they began to pine for their native air. Their father loved them, and

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though many people tried to persuade him to stay in England, he would not listen to them, but returned to Naples. There he built a beautiful home, and he and his little boys lived very happily together.

Every day, and often all day, the children roamed about the beautiful country; running and playing as little boys of all countries do. Soon they began to recover health and strength. The colour came back to their cheeks, and their large, dark eyes looked bright and happy. Everybody loved them, for they were dear, engaging little fellows; loving and lovable.

One evening they did not return home as usual, and their father went out to look for them. He could not find them anywhere; and as night came on he became seriously alarmed. The neighbours turned out to help the search; but the night passed, and still no one found them. When daylight came they were found lying side by side on the road, quite dead. There had been a thunderstorm, and it was supposed that a flash of lightning had killed them.

They were only seven years old when they died. It was a sad end for the poor little lazzaroni, was it not? A song was written about them—

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'Piangete, fanciulli
I piccoli lazzaroni.'

'Weep little children, weep for the little lazzaroni.'

Now I am going to tell you about a very different child. A boy named Volney Bekner. His father, a poor Irish sailor, taught him to swim when he was three years old, and used to spring into the sea with him, from the poop of the vessel. Volney was brave and daring, and loved to imitate his father. He was strong too, and when he was five years old could follow the vessel two leagues.

He was a most useful little fellow, for he could climb the rigging quicker than a man could, and being so small could make his way to all sorts of dangerous places. The sailors were very fond of their little mate, and proud of him too. In a storm it was Volney who was first to climb the mast, and commence to work. Of course he was not so strong as the men, but he was quick and agile. As he grew older, his captain took him in hand and taught him, and Volney repaid him by gratitude and diligence.

At twelve years of age he was head of the pilot apprentices, and had double rations and double pay.

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'If this little fellow continues to conduct himself with the same bravery and prudence, he will, I am sure, attain a position far above mine,' said the captain one day. 'Is it not true, my lad, that you love glory?'

'Yes, captain.'

'Do you know what glory is?'

'It is faithfully to serve one's country, and honourably to fulfil the duties of one's station,' said Volney; and he was right, though many boys would not care much for such glory without renown.

One day a little American girl, daughter of one of the passengers, fell overboard. Volney's father saw her fall, and immediately sprang after her and caught her in his arms. When he rose to the surface he found that the vessel had veered, and was a long way off. He swam as fast as he could after her, and made good way. All the passengers and crew were assembled on deck, watching and cheering him on.

Suddenly he stopped, and turned out of the direct line. For the moment they could not imagine what was the matter; but a shout which chilled their blood told the awful truth.

'Help! help! a shark!'

Can you imagine the agony of the father and

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of little Volney! The one saw his little daughter, his darling child, close to the jaws of death; the other saw his brave father manfully risking life itself to save a stranger's child. It was an awful moment. The shark gained upon the sailor, who held the child closely to him, refusing even then to save his life at the cost of hers. Mad with horror and despair, the father tried to throw himself overboard; but they held him back. He offered the whole of his fortune to any one who would save his child!

The crew fired in vain at the shark; they could not harm it. All seemed lost; and they were giving up all hope when they saw young Volney in the water, swimming toward the shark, with a sharp sword in his hand. Gliding under the monster, he plunged his sword into his body right up to the hilt.

Told by the ringing cheers that help was at hand, the sailor Bekner swam with redoubled energy, and gained the ship in safety, little knowing that his brave boy was between him and his terrible pursuer.

Furious with pain, the shark turned and followed Volney, who at first deliberately swam away from the ship to allow his father time to escape. The excitement was now greater than

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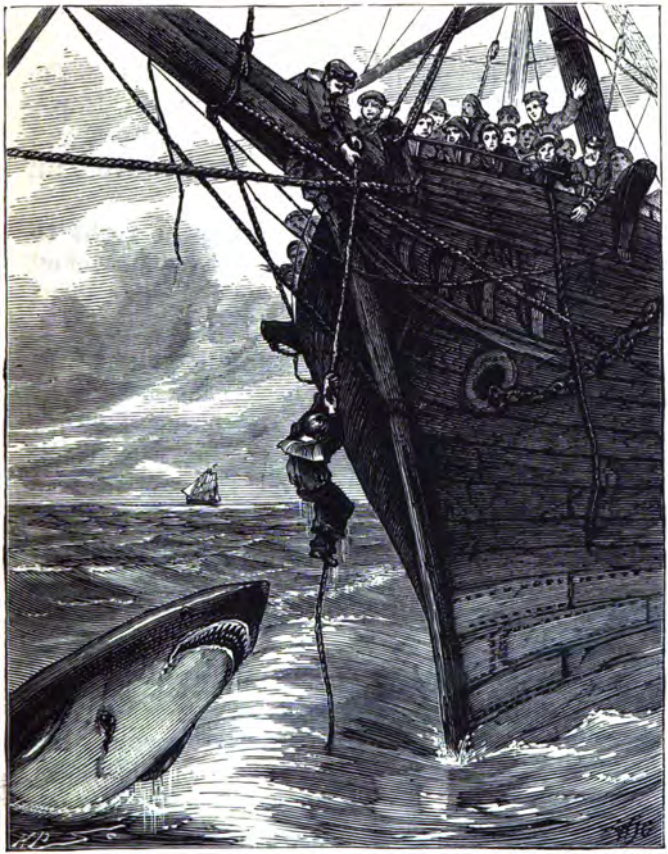

THE ENRAGED SHARK MADE ONE DESPERATE SPRING IN THE AIR. *See page* 124.

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ever. All that could be done to frighten the shark and encourage the boy was done. Ropes were thrown over the side of the vessel, and Volney swam toward them; not, however, till he saw that his father was safe.

To avoid his enemy he swam from right to left—not in a direct line. At last he stretched out his hand and seized the rope. Then went up such a shout—'He is saved! he is saved!'

Many willing hands were outstretched to pull the rope in, and it was fifteen feet above the surface of the water, when the enraged shark made one desperate spring in the air, seized the brave boy in the middle, and snapped him in two.

Thus died a noble boy, who 'faithfully served his country, and honourably fulfilled the duties of his station." The glory he coveted was his.

There is a great deal of talk about glory, even in the present day. Some think it a glorious thing to go to war and fight for the proud purpose of humiliating a too haughty neighbour. Some think it glorious to add to their country's dominions, no matter by what means, fair or foul. These go through the world with a song and shout, and this is what they sing:—

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'The good old rule, the simple plan,
That those do take who have the power,
And those do keep who can.'

But there are those who think it more glorious to faithfully perform the duty God has given them. Who render to every man his due, and defraud no one; who are true and loyal, and upright in their dealings with their neighbours.

And this is the sort of glory I want you bairns to covet. Be good and honourable, and faithful to your duty, no matter how small and insignificant it may be; and though, fortunately for you, you are not likely to be tried as Volney was, you will doubtless have many opportunities for practising the heroism which brings true glory.

Let me give you a motto: 'BE FAITHFUL!'

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KATHLEEN NELSON.

HOLIDAY, indeed! I wonder at your thinking of such a thing! If it is your birthday to-morrow that is no reason why you should he lazy and idle. Let me hear no more about holidays. Get your books and learn your lessons, and mind you don't go down in the kitchen. I won't have you chattering with Jane. I shall have her asking for a holiday next.' And Miss Nelson looked sternly at her little niece, who actually had the audacity to ask for a birthday holiday. The child stood perfectly

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still till the banging of the hall-door announced her aunt's departure, and then throwing herself on the rug, burst into a violent fit of tears.

Poor little orphan Kathleen! A year ago her birthday had been greeted by the loving kisses of a father and mother, whose almost idolized darling she had been. Now they were gone, and there was no one even to wish her 'Many happy returns of the day.' Miss Nelson thought she had done her earthly duty when she had given her food and clothing and education. That the child needed companionship and sympathy in her daily pursuits and occupations never entered her head, still less that she wanted recreation and amusement. Not that she was purposely unkind to her dead sister's little orphan daughter, but unfortunately she was one of those strange anomalies—women who have no natural love for children. Perhaps she might have been different if she had had children of her own; but she was Miss Nelson still, and likely to remain Miss Nelson to the end of the chapter.

As Kathleen lay sobbing on the hearth-rug the door opened, and Jane, her aunt's servant, came in. 'Miss Kathy,' she said, softly, 'the little girl over the way is having a birthday

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party to-night, and Susan, her maid, has promised to draw up one of the blinds, so that you can see right in. You go up into your aunt's room, and look out of her window. Here's my warm shawl to wrap round you; it will keep you nice and warm. You will hear your aunt's rap, and can get safely down before I unfasten the chain. I've got all my ironing to do, but I'll run up now and then for a peep.'

Lifting the child to her feet, she muffled her up in the shawl, and took her to the foot of the stairs. 'Run along, there's a dear,' she said kindly; but Kathleen hesitated.

'Suppose aunt asks me what I have been doing, Jane, what can I say? She will be so cross.'

'Just say you've been doing nothing. I am sure she's called looking-out-of-the-window "nothing" often enough. What did she say to you this afternoon, when you were watching the folks go by? "Don't stand at that window, doing nothing; come and get your work at once!" Now, didn't she?'

Only half-satisfied with this sophistry, Kathleen ran upstairs. The great house opposite was one blaze of light, and, the street being narrow, she could see in distinctly through the

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thin lace curtains drawn across the great bay-window. The spacious room seemed filled with merry children, and she soon detected among them the little birthday-queen, with her white dress, and wealth of golden hair, crowned with crimson berries. Mr. Lytton was there too, the little girl's papa; and Kathleen could just see Mrs. Lytton's profile, as she sat at the piano. Presently she began to play, and all the children sat still, except the fair-haired queen, who kept moving about, touching everything that came in her way, while sometimes the music was soft and low, and sometimes loud. At last she paused before her father, and, taking off her wreath, stood on tiptoe, and placed it on his head. Then there was such a noise. The music crashed, and all the children laughed and clapped their hands, while Mr. Lytton lifted up his little daughter and kissed her.

Kathleen had never seen magic music before, and wondered what strange, new game they were playing. But she quite understood the rollicking game of blind-man's-buff which followed. Jane came running up, to have a look; and they both laughed, till the tears ran down their cheeks, at the funny little boy in the velvet knickerbockers, who tumbled over everybody

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and everything in his endeavours to get out of the blind man's way.

'I must go!' suddenly exclaimed Jane, remembering her ironing. 'Susan said they were going to have snap-dragon, and I should like to see that. You call me, Miss Kathy dear, will you?'

She hurried down; and Kathleen, resting her elbows on the window-sill, watched the fun in which she had no share. While Jane was there to laugh with her, she did not so much mind; but, now that she had gone down, she felt very lonely and sad. How could she help it, poor little thing? Was not the scene opposite one of fairy enchantment to her childish imagination? Was it not natural that she should long to be in the midst of the merry, happy throng?

At last the lights went, and then a mass of blue flame appeared, and Kathleen ran to the top of the stairs and called Jane. They watched the little bits of blue flame flying about the room, as the children tossed up the burning fruit, and listened to the merry shouts and laughter till they got quite excited.

'My word!' cried Jane, as a sharp, imperative knock was heard at the front door. 'Here's your aunt! Run, Miss Kathy!'

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They both ran, and Kathleen was safely seated in the sitting-room by the time her aunt came in.

'Well, what have you been doing this evening?' asked Miss Nelson, when she had taken off her bonnet and shawl, and was comfortably seated in her arm-chair before the fire.

'Nothing,' replied Kathleen, timidly.

'Nothing!—haven't you been learning your lessons?'

'I learnt them before you went out, Aunt Priscilla.'

'O, indeed! learned them before I went out, did you? And, pray, what sort of learning was it?'

'I think I know them, aunt.'

'Thinking won't do for me. Well, I shall see to-morrow morning; and if your lessons are so easy that you can learn them in so short a time, you shall have longer ones. Now, eat your supper, and go to bed.'

Kathleen sat mutely down to the thick slice of bread-and-butter and cup of milk which Jane had just placed on the table, and Miss Nelson took up a book. Suddenly a suppressed sob fell upon her ear, and she turned quickly

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toward the little figure seated so quietly at the table.

'What are you crying for?' she demanded, sharply; but there was no reply; and, after waiting a minute, she said, sternly, 'Come here directly!'

Kathleen slowly left her seat, and, shaking from head to foot with uncontrollable sobs, stood before her aunt.

'Now,' said Miss Nelson, 'put your hands down from your face, and tell me what you are crying for.'

Still there was no answer, and Miss Nelson's anger rose. Drawing the child to her with no gentle hand, she said, slowly, and with a peculiar emphasis, which was only too familiar to Kathy, 'If you don't tell me at once what you are crying for, I will give you something that you will never forget.' And she enforced the words with a slight shake of the resistless little form.

'I can't help it—O, I can't help it!' sobbed the child, despairingly, frightened into speech. 'I want my own mamma, and I shall never see her again—never! What shall I do? what shall I do?'

'No, you will never see her again if you are such a naughty girl,' said Miss Nelson, severely;

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'your mamma has gone to heaven, and they only have good people there. Now, stop crying directly, and go to bed, and try to be a better girl, and then perhaps you will go to heaven some day.'

'If I'm very good, will God let me go very soon?' said Kathleen, resolutely choking back her sobs.

'Don't talk like that, child,' said her aunt, crossly; 'you'll go when you are ready, I suppose. Now go to bed, and don't let me hear any more of such nonsense.'

One moment the warm, little lips were pressed to the cold, unsympathizing face, and then the child was gone.

'Such notions!' muttered Miss Nelson. 'Heaven indeed! I reckon she had better think a little more of earth first. I wonder if all children are as troublesome. It is a pity I cannot send her to a boarding-school: she would be out of the way then.'

Out of the shadowy past rose the vision of a pale, sweet face, with trustful, dying eyes, and with it the memory of scarcely-whispered words —'Take care of my darling, Priscilla. Be kind to her for my sake, and don't send her to school.'

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She knew what that meant; how her sister had dreaded the thought of a boarding-school for her sensitive little daughter, and she had promised never to send her to one. It would perhaps have been better for Kathleen had her mother not extracted that promise.

An hour later Jane stole quietly into the bedroom with a slice of rich cake, which Susan had brought over for the wistful-looking little orphan, whose lonely lot had aroused her sympathy.

But Kathleen was asleep: the moonlight streaming in on the sweet little face showed the tears still wet on the long eyelashes, and, as Jane bent over her, a quivering sob broke from the parted lips.

'Poor little thing,' murmured the kind-hearted girl, pityingly. 'She's cried herself to sleep! Wouldn't I just like to shake that old aunt of hers, that's all!' And she shook her fist indignantly at an imaginary Miss Nelson.

'Susan, what was that you said about leaving up one of the blinds for the little girl opposite to see my party?'

'I thought it would be such a treat to the poor little thing, Miss Ethel,' replied Susan, who was preparing her little mistress for bed after

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the party. 'She doesn't get much pleasure any way. Jane their servant tells me that she spends half her time in learning lessons, and the other half in saying them. It's her birthday to-morrow, but she isn't even to have a holiday. She went to bed crying to-night, so we suppose that she let out to her aunt that she had been watching your party, and Miss Nelson scolded her. Anyhow she's been scolding her, for Jane heard her.'

'How do you know?' asked Ethel.

'Well, Miss Ethel, the truth is I felt so sorry for the child, that I ran over just now with a slice of my cake for her, and then Jane told me. She is an orphan; her father and mother died only a few months ago.'

Ethel Lytton rose from her seat, and crossing the room, drew the curtain of the window on one side, and looked out. There were no lights in the brown house opposite, and it looked dingy and dull in the moonlight.

'I shouldn't like to live there! What is her name, Susan?'

'Kathleen M'Arthur, Miss Ethel. Jane says she often watches you when you are at the windows.'

Susan chatted on, revealing much of the every-

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day life over the way, and Ethel listened pityingly. At last she was in bed and the lights lowered, but she did not go to sleep. A multitude of thoughts were passing through the busy little brain. The clock struck one, and she heard a step in the corridor. It was Mrs. Lytton, passing to her own room, and Ethel sprang up and called her.

'Not asleep yet, my dear! It is past one.'

'I know; I just heard it strike. Mamma, how beautiful you look!' said the child, admiringly, as her mother came forward in her glistening evening robes and shining jewels.

Mrs. Lytton smiled. 'How beautiful my dress looks, you mean. Naughty child, you ought to have been asleep long ago. Come, give me a kiss, and then shut your eyes.'

'Don't go yet, mamma, please don't! Just wait one minute. I want to ask you something.'

'Well, what is it?' asked her mother, smoothing back the soft, wavy hair from the thoughtful forehead. 'Won't to-morrow do as well?'

'No, I want to know now. Mamma, what did the minister mean last Sunday when he said we ought to work as well as pray? I have been

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thinking about it ever since I came to bed, and I can't get it right, somehow. Does it mean that when we ask God to do anything we must try and help Him to do it?'

'What has put such thoughts into your head to-night, Ethel?' asked her mother, surprised at such a question at such a time.

'It was something Susan told me about the little girl over the way, mamma. She is an orphan, and her aunt never lets her have any one there to play with, and won't even give her a holiday on her birthday. Isn't it a shame?'

Mrs. Lytton smiled at the indignant tone.

'But what has all this to do with your question, dear?'

'Why—don't you see?—I pray every night and every morning that God will take care of all the poor little orphans and make them happy. You know, mamma, you taught me that prayer when I was quite a little girl, and I've never given it up. To-night, when I was saying it, I suddenly remembered something in the sermon last Sunday, about its being no use praying unless we worked as well, and I waited till you came up to ask what it means.'

'It means that we have no right to ask God

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to do what we can do ourselves,' replied Mrs. Lytton, after a short pause.

The intelligent little mind grasped her meaning, and after pondering it over for a few minutes, Ethel said, quietly, 'Then, mamma, I ought not to ask God to make the orphans happy unless I am doing all I can to make them happy myself.'

'God would rather have one act of love from His little girl than twenty prayers.'

'May I begin to-morrow, mamma? I have prayed ever so long, and now may I begin to work as well?'

'What do you want to do, dear?'

'The little girl over the way, mayn't I ask her to come here and play with me, and give her some of my books and things? It is her birthday to-morrow; I should like to make her happy, mamma.'

'So you shall, my darling;' and Mrs. Lytton kissed her little daughter, and went away. And in a few minutes Ethel was asleep.

And as she slept she dreamed that she was in a garden, picking flowers. And as she went on the flowers got more and more beautiful, and she threw away those she had already gathered, so that she might pick the others. But those

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she threw away took root and grew again, more lovely than ever. And so she went on till she came to a steep precipice, and, looking down, saw a little girl in a black frock, and with soft brown eyes and hair, gazing wistfully up.

'Why don't you climb up?' asked Ethel; 'it is so nice here. Look! what beautiful flowers.'

'I want to come up, but I can't,' answered the child; and then Ethel saw that it was the little girl over the way.

'Why can't you get up?' she asked.

'There is a great rock half-way up, and it stops me.'

Ethel looked round. 'If I could see a gardener I'd ask him to help you,' she said; and at that moment a gardener appeared down one of the walks. She ran after him, calling him to stop, and he turned and stood still.

He looked very kind and gentle, but shook his head when Ethel told him what she wanted.

'Have you tried to help the little girl up yourself?' he asked; and she was obliged to say No.

'Then I can do nothing for you now. You

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must do all you can yourself; and if you fail, then ask me.' And he went on his way.

Ethel ran back. 'He says I'm to help you,' she cried, leaning over the edge; 'but I'm afraid I shall hurt myself.'

The little girl made no reply, but looked wistfully up, and the large tears gathered in her eyes.

'Try again,' said Ethel; 'perhaps you'll do it this time.'

Up the steep ascent toiled Kathleen, but at the great rock stopped, 'I can't get up!' she cried. 'If the gardener would only reach me his hand, I could climb over; but there's nothing to hold by.'

'I'll go and ask him again,' said Ethel. But as she turned there flashed across her mind—'God would rather have one kind act of love from his little girl than twenty prayers.'

In a moment the resolute little mind was made up. Off went her shoes, and she stepped carefully over the edge of the precipice. It wasn't so steep as it looked; and, after the first few steps, all difficulty vanished, and soon she stood on the rock.

'Now, give me your hand, and put your foot in that niche, and jump.' And Kathleen did as

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she told her, and the next moment was by her side. Then they went on hand-in-hand, and the flowers bloomed more beautifully than ever, and the birds sang more sweetly, and the grass grew greener and softer, and that was all Ethel ever remembered.

'Wasn't it funny, mamma, that I should dream that just after our talk about helping to make the little girl happy?' she said to her mother next day. 'You see I had to help her over the rock all myself. The gardener wouldn't do what he knew I could do myself. My dream means something—doesn't it, mamma? It is like one of my allegories.'

Yes, Ethel's dream had its meaning. Great was Miss Nelson's surprise that afternoon when Jane ushered in Mrs. Lytton, and greater still her astonishment when she found she had come to invite Kathleen to spend the afternoon and evening with her own little girl.

'We have been neighbours a long time, Miss Nelson,' she said, in her gentle, kindly way; 'and our little girls ought to be friends. My Ethel is very anxious for your little niece's acquaintance, and is waiting very impatiently for my return.' And she glanced up with a smile to one of the opposite windows, where a

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little golden head was plainly visible through the lace curtains.

Flattered by what she took to be a compliment to herself, Miss Nelson rang the bell, and told Jane to get Miss Kathleen ready to go out to tea, and, under the influence of her visitor's genial manner, actually kissed the child, and graciously hoped she would be a good girl and behave herself.

Bewildered with happiness, Kathleen entered the fairy-land of 'Over the way.' Lovely exotics filled the rooms with richest fragrance. Exquisite statues startled her with their silent grace. Beautiful faces smiled upon her from the pictured walls. But fairest of all to the shy child stood Ethel, with the light of welcome in her eyes, and words of welcome on her lips.

'I'm so glad you've come,' she said, simply, taking her hand; 'and I hope you will come over very, very often now.'

Ora et labora! God cares more for one act of love than for twenty deedless prayers; and He whispered the message to the child's loving heart, 'Carry sunshine and gladness into the desolate little life over the way.' And Ethel heard.

Ora et labora! Pray *and* work. And the

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long days grew shorter, and lessons did not seem so difficult, and the sky seemed brighter, and life a more joyous thing, to little Kathleen; for was there not always now a haven of rest—a loving, sympathizing little friend, *Over the Way?*

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ROYAL AND LOYAL.

A TALE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

THE sun was setting, casting long slanting rays over the withered grass in the neglected gardens of the Tuileries. It was a close warm evening, and the air unusually still. A few of the National Guard loitered about in listless groups, and here and there, now and again, a turbulent, restless citizen, appeared to gaze upon the palace which France had made the prison of her king.

Across one of the open spaces a dark-haired, dark-eyed boy walked with stately step. The poverty of his dress could not conceal the

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exquisite grace of his slender little figure, and the ragged cap was pressed upon as noble and aristocratic a little head as ever haughtily lifted itself in the gorgeous saloons of the proud old French noblesse.

For a few moments he paused, and fixed his gaze on the palace windows, every now and then glancing furtively round with suspicious, watchful eyes.

Suddenly at one of the windows appeared a little childish face of wondrous beauty, and of wondrous sadness. Large blue eyes, full of tears, gazed out upon the melancholy sunset, and the broad forehead was pressed close to the cold glass, over which the little listless fingers wandered to and fro. A second face appeared behind, and after a cautious look all round, the window was quietly opened. The boy-watcher's heart beat loud and fast, and the hot blood coursed wildly through his veins. He knew too well what all these precautions meant—that when the garden was full of its usual idlers it was not safe for even the boy prince to appear at an opened window. He was royal, and that was a crime in those days.

Eager to drink in the cool evening air, the child leaned forward, and his voice came float-

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ing out on the summer stillness, sweet and silvery. 'It is so hot indoors! I wish I could go out! That ragged little boy may go and see my garden and I must not! I wish I were a ragged little boy!'

'O, Charles!' said a reproving voice. 'I dare say that boy thinks it a great thing to be a prince.'

'I do not, then,' was the impatient reply.

A dirty, ragged dog was crouching in the shade of a tree close by the window. Taking a biscuit from his pocket, the dark-haired boy broke it, and threw the fragments toward the palace with shout and clap.

'Here, Moufflet! catch it, sir!' As the words fell on the ear of the little prisoner he started and gazed in almost speechless astonishment at the speaker.

'It is Victor!' he exclaimed; and then looked round with frightened eyes. But the nearest group of guards were too far off to hear. A change came over the little face, which grew bright and glad. No sign passed between the boys; no casual observer would have known that they had ever met before; and yet Victor, Vicomte de Choiseul, and Louis Charles of France, had been true boyish friends and playfellows in

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the past. With apparent nonchalance Victor tossed his biscuits, and teased the cur to which he gave the name of Louis' own pet dog. But every now and then the dark eyes flashed love and sympathy to the blue ones which were not slow to reply in like language. Eyes can be eloquent when the tongue is forced to silence.

The guards, in the distance, only saw a *gamin* and a ragged mongrel, and little knew that the tattered jacket covered as proud a heart as could be found in all proud France.

But it was not safe to loiter, especially when Moufflet, having begged in vain, turned tail and ran away. With all his headstrong daring, Victor knew better than to stay too long near the royal windows. He had risked everything to see his little playmate once again before he left ill-fated Paris, and now reluctantly turned away.

'O, Victor! Good-bye, Victor!' whispered the little Dauphin, with fast-returning tears, as, carelessly whistling the air of the well-known song:

'O, Richard! O, my King!
All the world abandons thee!'

Victor sauntered on. There was one rapid

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interchange of loving smiles, and with a long breath, which was half a sob, Louis watched his friend disappear beyond a clump of shrubs.

Not daring to turn his head, Victor passed the first group of guards, and then with lighter heart and step bounded over the ground.

'Stop!' cried a stern, peremptory voice: and brave as he was his dark face blanched, as with assumed indifference he obeyed.

"So thou hast been to see the Dauphin,' said a grave, cold-looking man, laying his hand upon his shoulder. 'Look up; I seem to know your face. Who are you?'

For a moment the boy hesitated, then lifting his head proudly, said: 'You ought to know me, for you have met me more than once in my father's house. I know you, Monsieur Guadet.'

'Do you know what risk you run, rash boy? While the blood of your kinsmen is yet staining the streets of Paris, is it the time for you to visit your royal playmate?' said the man harshly. 'Well for you that Pétion is haranguing the citizens over yonder; they might otherwise interfere with your promenade, Monsieur le Vicomte de Choiseul.'

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The boy coloured at the unveiled sarcasm of the republican leader.

'They would not recognise me,' he answered, looking down upon his ragged garb with a grimace and a shrug; 'I look a veritable *sans-culotte!*'

'It takes more than dress or the want of it, to make the *sans-culotte*,' replied Guadet, curtly. 'Go home, and tell no one of your visit to the Tuileries. To be the friend of Louis Charles is no passport to a citizen's heart.'

'They have no heart,' cried the boy, impetuously. 'They are base-born murderers, Monsieur Guadet! You know it.'

The deputy's face darkened ominously. 'Bah! it is child's talk!' he said, impatiently, half to himself. 'Keep that chattering tongue of yours within your teeth, Monsieur—and look! the citizens are on their way home. Remember the Tuileries garden is not the safest of promenades for your father's son.'

With a nod he went on his way, and the boy-vicomte fled over the brown and withered grass. A number of citizens were flocking into the courts and gardens, some of them singing songs of the people, full of coarse jests, and insults to the fallen royalty of France. A boy came swing-

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ing along singing one with a constant refrain:

'Le petit Veto est tue! *
Est mort et enterre!'

For the enlightened and elevated citizens of the French republic were not above amusing themselves with cruel songs about a little seven-year-old boy.

Victor's eyes grew hot with passionate, generous anger, but restraining his wrath he tried to pass the young *gamin*, who kept swinging to and fro in the narrow street. Something in his face attracted the boy's notice, and planting himself in front of him he ordered him to stop. He was a clumsy, heavy boy, some years older than Victor; but in a moment the clenched fist of the little trained aristocrat levelled him with the ground. Furious with rage, the son of the people sprang to his feet, and raising the war-whoop of the republic darted after the hated enemy of his class.

The well-known shout, 'Down with the aristo-

* 'Little Veto is killed!
Is dead and buried!'

Veto was the nickname given to the royal family. Little Veto was the Prince Royal.

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crats!' brought a crowd of eager pursuers, and the streets resounded with their cries. Men and women flocked to their doors, and hearing the garbled statement that an aristocrat had struck a citizen, joined heart and voice in the chase.

Down one street and up another fled the hunted boy, the perspiration rolling down his face in large drops, and his brave, firm lips white with an uncontrollable fear.

'What has he done?' said a powerful-looking man with bare arms. 'An aristocrat! bah! that little lad! Let him go.'

Nevertheless he joined the chase, and added one more to the yelling mob. It was an instinct in the republican to hunt the aristocrat. As well tell a dog to leave a cat alone.

At bay at last the panting, sobbing boy stood back against a wall, and gathering up his courage flashed a grand defiance upon the triumphant crowd.

'He is brave! the little lad!' said Leblanc, the butcher with the bare arms. 'Ah! those aristocrats are all brave. What are they going to do with him?'

'Throw him in the river! Hang him to the lamp-post with a tri-coloured riband! Down with the aristocrats! *Vive la nation!*' cried the

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mob, pressing closer round their helpless victim. Leblanc forced his way through and seized the little Vicomte's delicate ear.

'I know thy face! Ah! I have seen thee in the garden at the Tuileries often. Thou wast one of the boy regiment—little Veto's plaything!'

'Thy son was also in the boy-regiment, but thou dost not call him an aristocrat,' replied Victor, striving to still his trembling hands.

'Art thou not an aristocrat!'

'I am a citizen!' was the proud reply.

'Then take the citizen's oath. Swear to love liberty and equality.'

'I swear it.'

'Swear to hate the King and Queen and al' royalty!'

The hot blood mounted to the boy's dark face, and then receded, leaving him ghastly pale.

There was silence for a few moments, and then a murmur rose. 'He will not take the oath! the young wolf-cub! *A bas les aristocrats!*'

'See here,' said Leblanc, twisting his ear. 'There is no room in France for any but good citizens. Wilt thou take the oath or make room for those who will?'

'Why waste more words?' cried a burly

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baker from the Faubourg Saint Antoine. 'A free nation knows how to empty the nurseries of the tyrants. Down with the little aristocrat!'

'Little Veto's friend!' cried Leblanc's son, who had pushed his way to his father's side. 'Monsieur le Vicomte de Choiseul!'

At the well-known, hated name a storm of execration rose. 'Little Veto's friend! Choiseul's son! the favourite of royalty! Death to the aristocrats!'

'I'll make him take the oath,' said Leblanc, grimly. 'Swear to hate little Veto, the son of the tyrant!'

There was no reply, and the mob grew impatient.

'Swear!' said Leblanc, shaking him roughly. 'Take the oath if thou art as thou sayest a good citizen. Swear to hate all the royal family of tyrants, and especially thy friend the Prince Royal. Come now, swear, to save thy life.'

'I will not!' said the noble boy, drawing himself up proudly and glancing with scorn at the infuriated mob. 'I will swear to love my country, but not to hate my friend!'

Moved by one impulse the mob pushed down an adjacent street which led to the River Seine,

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carrying their unresisting victim in their midst. Even women, mothers, many of them, joined the throng and followed on to see the murder of a helpless child. 'Execution of an aristocrat, by right of birth a tyrant!' *they* called it. It was a woman's hand which tore the cap from the shapely little head, and placed instead the hideous red cap of the republic; and it was a woman's hand which threw the tri-coloured ribands round his neck.

One wild cry for mercy burst from the horror-stricken boy, but was lost in the uproar.

Arrived at the banks of the river they stopped, and seizing the opportunity for an oration—an opportunity never voluntarily lost by a French republican—Leblanc began to address the crowd, still grasping firmly the boy's tortured ear. But suddenly he paused. Forcing his way towards him came a man well-known and trusted just then by the fickle, ever-changing mob. It was Guadet, the republican deputy from Bordeaux, and at that time President of the Legislative Assembly. .

As ready to cheer an idol as to hiss a foe, the citizens greeted him with vivats, and the air rang with patriotic shouts.

There was a weary, half-contemptuous look

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on the President's austere face as he glanced at the trembling child, and then at the burly men and brawny women crowding around.

'What does it mean?' he asked. 'What has the boy done?'

Done! he had done the worst thing, committed the worst crime under heaven! He had dared to be born an aristocrat!

'He refuses the oath!'

'He is a friend of little Veto's!'

'He is a tyrant by instinct. He dared to strike a free citizen!'

Accusations truly most grave and serious!

'Is it true?' asked Guadet, watching the proud face intently.

'I am not a tyrant! I am a noble, and I am the Dauphin's friend.'

'Dost thou refuse the oath?'

'I refuse to swear to hate my friend!' replied the boy dauntlessly.

Gaudet looked round upon the sea of faces, and his heart grew sick within him. Were these the noble people for whom he was claiming freedom, liberty, and equality? What equality could there be between the lordly lion and the skulking cur!

Despite his strong republicanism, there was no

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aristocrat in France who felt a more bitter contempt for the senseless, raving democrat than did Guadet at that moment.

What was the use of preaching moderation, justice, clemency, to such a bloodthirsty crew? As for equality!

He looked at the dauntless little hero, who for his friend was willing to give up his life. He looked at the bloodhounds of the great republic, yelling, hooting, and worse still, laughing, loud mirthless laugh! a caricature of mirth! Equality was a vague fiction of the heated brain.

There was no equality; there never could be any!

Leaping on a tumbril he signed for silence.

'Citizens, a great republic to be consistent, must maintain its laws. In a few days France will be proclaimed a republic. Already it is so in all but name, for the hand which has held the tyrant's sceptre has lost its power for ever. And now at the commencement of a new, free life it becomes all true patriots to live for their country. The nation must forget everything save the nation!'

He could scarcely proceed for the uproar of applause, and it was some time before he could make his voice heard.

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'But what has all this to do with the aristocrats?' murmured one discontentedly.

'Silence!' roared Leblanc, who idolised Guadet.

Working himself up as he went on, Guadet harangued them into a blissful state of self-exaltation. Already they looked upon themselves as the saviours of a poor, unhappy, king-ridden world. The fertile seed of republicanism was to be carried by their noble hands into all the countries of the world, and freedom and liberty were to follow in their wake.

'And we must not forget that the victor's most glorious jewel is clemency,' continued the orator. 'The people are just and brave, they must also be clement and merciful. It is not by slaying children that the great republic will draw honour upon her head. We must not deny liberty while preaching it. There is work enough without ransacking the nurseries!'

At this unexpected turn some applauded, some hissed and hooted, reviling the aristocrats as traitors and tyrants.

'And such a little dainty aristocrat as this!' grumbled a woman with a baby in her arms. 'Some of them are not so bad, but this one! bah! the little viper!'

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'He struck me! a free citizen!' cried the boy who had raised the hue and cry.

Coming from such a source, as ragged and tattered a gamin as ever made mud pies in the gutters of Paris, the words sounded irresistibly ludicrous. Easily swayed to laughter as to wrath, the mob turned round upon the luckless lad.

'Thou!' cried Leblanc, holding his fat sides. 'Thou a free citizen!'

'Citizen Sans-terre! citizen Sans-chapeau!' * cried one and another, glad of a butt; and Guadet by a sign to Leblanc encouraged him to proceed.

'And the meaning of it all is that the little aristocrat is to be let off!' said the grumbling woman pressing to the front, and shaking her fist in Victor's face. 'How now, citizen Guadet! is that how you establish a republic? Take my word for it the young viper will turn and sting you one of these days! He has not played with little Veto for nothing.'

'Hold thy noisy chattering tongue!' roared Leblanc. 'The citizen Guadet is right; there is better work for men than ransacking nurseries!

* Landless, Hatless.

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and as for you, citizeness, you ought to be at home nursing your baby!'

Taking the hand of the trembling boy, Guadet led him through the mob, over which he had such wondrous control. They made way, reluctantly, yet not altogether unwillingly; for his words had roused a better feeling than the leaders of the revolution were apt to raise.

'Hast thou learned wisdom now?' he asked, with a melancholy smile, as they left the noisy crowd behind.

There was no reply, and glancing at his companion the white compressed lips told their own tale of hysterical emotion.

'How now, little citizen!' he said, with a kindlier look in his stern, grave eyes. 'Not faint-hearted after such a brave daring!'

'I am a coward!' cried the boy, dashing away the blinding tears, with indignant hand. 'One would think it was a timid girl! I am a coward!'

'Nay! a brave boy, and a noble friend!' said Guadet. 'Never mind the tears; they are nothing! the bravest men have shed the bitterest tears. Now hasten home, and if any one questions you there, say that Guadet the republican saved your life because he knew how to honour

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a loyal friendship. If the king had had many such as you, with riper years, his crown and throne would now be far beyond our reach.'

They parted; the one to take his place among the king's accusers; the other to bid farewell to Paris and leave it ere another day had dawned.

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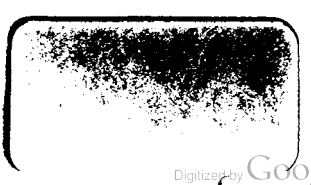

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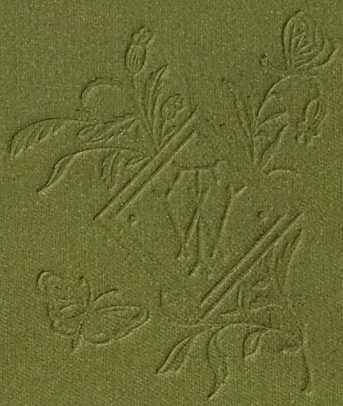

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